

THE EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS
WITH CHILDREN IN ELEMENTARY
ENGLISH PROGRAMS AND FRENCH
IMMERSION PROGRAMS JK-G2

by

Jennifer Bingley

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts (MA) in Psychology

The School of Graduate Studies
Laurentian University
Sudbury, Ontario, Canada

© Jennifer Bingley, 2014

THESIS DEFENCE COMMITTEE/COMITÉ DE SOUTENANCE DE THÈSE

Laurentian Université/Université Laurentienne
School of Graduate Studies/École des études supérieures

Title of Thesis Titre de la thèse	THE EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN ELEMENTARY ENGLISH PROGRAMS AND FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMS JK-G2		
Name of Candidate Nom du candidat	Bingley, Jennifer		
Degree Diplôme	Master of Arts		
Department/Program Département/Programme	Psychology	Date of Defence Date de la soutenance	April 16, 2014

APPROVED/APPROUVÉ

Thesis Examiners/Examineurs de thèse:

Dr. Shelley Watson
(Co-supervisor/Co-directrice de thèse)

Dr. Elizabeth Levin
(Co-supervisor/Co-directrice de thèse)

Dr. Stephanie Arnott
(External Examiner/Examinatrice externe)

Approved for the School of Graduate Studies
Approuvé pour l'École des études supérieures
Dr. David Lesbarrères
M. David Lesbarrères
Director, School of Graduate Studies
Directeur, École des études supérieures

ACCESSIBILITY CLAUSE AND PERMISSION TO USE

I, **Jennifer Bingley**, hereby grant to Laurentian University and/or its agents the non-exclusive license to archive and make accessible my thesis, dissertation, or project report in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or for the duration of my copyright ownership. I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis, dissertation or project report. I also reserve the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis, dissertation, or project report. I further agree that permission for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor or professors who supervised my thesis work or, in their absence, by the Head of the Department in which my thesis work was done. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that this copy is being made available in this form by the authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research and may not be copied or reproduced except as permitted by the copyright laws without written authority from the copyright owner.

Abstract

This study examined the experiences of parents who enrolled their children in the English or French immersion program. Participants included parents of children in junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten and Grade 2. The primary method of data collection was parental interview. Questionnaires were also administered to parents with children in Grade 2. The results indicated that parents have different considerations when deciding to enroll their children in French immersion or English. Among parents with children in French immersion there was a trend of differential literacy practices and self-efficacy regarding homework support based on parental comfort in using the French language. Overall, the results indicate that parents desire more ease of access to information pertaining to enrollment and French immersion parents desire more easily accessible resources to support their children in homework.

Keywords

Home literacy, French immersion, elementary school, parental involvement

Acknowledgments

It truly has taken a village to write this paper.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Linda Lysynchuk, Dr. Shelley Watson and Dr. Elizabeth Levin for allowing me to become involved in their longitudinal study regarding predictors of success in French immersion. My time with the project has been wonderful! I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisors for their unwavering support during the entire project. Dr. Watson and Dr. Levin, I am grateful for your patience, kind guidance, and gentle push. I have grown both as a researcher and as a person under your care. I would also like to thank Dr. Lysynchuk who first inspired me to pursue graduate education: Your passion for teaching and education has always been a great source of inspiration!

I will be forever thankful to my family. To my parents for being my primary cheerleaders throughout this process and awaiting the completion of this document with an excitement that rivals my own. To my partner, Colin, and his family for providing me with a steady dose of laughter and always having faith in me to come through. I am also extremely grateful to my son for his perseverance and understanding. I love you all dearly.

Finally, this research would not have been possible without the numerous parents who volunteered their time and energy to participate in this project. This paper is dedicated to them.

Table of Contents

Thesis Defence Committee	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
List of Tables	vii
List of Appendices	viii
Experience of Parents with Children in English and French Immersion Programs	1
Bilingualism and French Immersion in Canada	4
Emergent Literacy	6
Cross-Language Transfer	7
The Home Environment	9
Vocabulary and the Home Environment	13
Formal and Informal Activities in the Home: Home Literacy Model	15
Bilingualism and the Home Environment	18
Parental Involvement in Academics: The Parent Involvement Model	21
Rationale for the Current Study	24
Research Questions	27
Reflexivity	27
Personal and Academic Experiences with Literacy and Education	28
Method	31
Participants	32
Measures	33
Semi-Structured Interview	34
Home Literacy Questionnaire	35
Data Analysis	36
Results	38
Reasons for enrolling (or not enrolling)	40
Opportunity	40
Falling behind	41

School reputation.....	41
Child characteristics.....	42
Cultural importance.....	42
Cognitive advantages.....	43
Confidence and Self-Efficacy	43
Parents feel they are unable to help with homework.....	44
Utilization of resources to support learning	47
Reading Together	49
French is Homework in French Immersion.....	51
French immersion parents who are comfortable using French.....	52
French immersion parents who are not comfortable using French	53
Importance of Communication and Support	56
Summary	58
Discussion	60
Strengths of the Current Study	66
Limitations of the Current Study.....	68
Implications for Future Research	70
Implications for Practice	72
Conclusion.....	73
References	75

List of Tables

Table 1: Themes, Subthemes and Frequency of Parental Report	39
---	----

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Research Ethics Board Approval	98
Appendix B: Questionnaire Consent Form	99
Appendix C: Interview Consent Form	100
Appendix D: Interview Guide	101
Appendix E: Home Literacy Questionnaire	102
Appendix F: Letter to Parents	105
Appendix G: Table of Themes and Sample Quotes	106

The Experience of Parents with Children in Elementary English and French Immersion Programs

This paper is about the experiences of parents who choose to enroll their children in a French immersion or English program and the literacy activities they engage in. Interviews and questionnaires were administered to parents with children in English and French immersion programs about their literacy practices. Literacy is a critical skill in Canada and there is a recognized relationship between the literacy activities that families engage in at home and reading achievement (Sénéchal & Young, 2008).

In modern society, it is generally accepted that literacy is a requirement for success and that individuals who lack this skill are at an enormous disadvantage (Blake & Blake, 2002). Literacy is certainly a critical ability for academic achievement (Desrochers & Major, 2008; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2002). To be successful in school, children must achieve fluency in reading by the time they are required to learn content from passages (Adams, 1990). In other words, by the time children are asked to learn academic information from textbooks in later grades, reading becomes the primary method through which children learn and they must be able to independently read information and glean understanding. At this time in their academic career, the amount learned and connections made between information is partly dependent on their ability to read and understand text.

In the literature, it has been well established that children who are better readers also tend to read more and, through reading, acquire more knowledge (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). As their peers build upon previously learned knowledge and skills, poor readers generally

continue to lag behind (Byrne, Freebody, & Gates, 1992). It has also been demonstrated that this difference is stable over time (Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1996; Scarborough, 2002). While only about 10% of children who have mastered literacy in elementary school will encounter reading difficulties, 65-75% of those who have been identified as having difficulty in elementary school will continue to have difficulty throughout their academic career (Scarborough, 2002). Furthermore, research shows that struggling in Grade 1 is associated with a reduced likelihood of graduating high school and pursuing further education (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2005). Clearly, failure to master literacy has serious, far reaching implications later in life.

Other consequences of falling behind in literacy development include a negative attitude toward reading (Kaniuka, 2010) and losing out on learning comprehension strategies (Allington, 1984). These deficits are compounded over time, resulting in those who have difficulties being left further behind their advantaged peers who succeed and grow academically. This phenomenon has been termed the “Matthew effect” by Stanovich (e.g., 1986). The consequences of failing to master literacy and related skills have serious implications throughout the lifespan that compound over time. Therefore, research regarding the predictors of reading success is essential to provide every child with the skills they require to achieve literacy. Furthermore, research shows that literacy begins at home (McBride-Chang, 2012).

The influence of the home environment on reading acquisition has been widely recognized in the literature (Bingham, 2007; Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995; Evans, Moretti, Shaw, & Fox, 2003; Hindman & Morrison, 2012; Neumann & Neumann, 2009; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2005, 2006; Stadler & McEvoy, 2003; Skibbe, Justice, Zucker, & McGinty,

2008). It has also been established that parental involvement is linked to academic outcomes (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski & Apostoleris, 1997; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dombusch, & Darling, 1992; Su-Chu & Willms, 1996; Zellman & Waterman, 1998). The Home Literacy Model (Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998) proposes that two types of literacy activities exist within the home and are differentially related to later reading outcomes: formal activities, or direct teaching of literacy skills, and informal activities. This model suggests that engagement in both types of activities is important for the development of later literacy, and that these activities are not correlated. For example, families may engage in any range of informal activities and any range of formal activities with their child.

A second model focuses on why parents become involved in their child's academics. The model of parent involvement in academics created by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) is based on the premise that parental involvement in academics has a positive influence on achievement. It posits that parental motivation to become involved in a child's education is influenced by three factors: parental role construction, parental sense of self efficacy in aiding their children to succeed academically, and parents' perceptions of opportunities, invitations, and demands for involvement. This model is focused on why parents become involved in their child's academics and how the decision to become involved is made.

A vast array of research has been conducted that focuses on the predictors of reading achievement among monolingual populations (e.g., Hood, Conlon, & Andrews, 2008; Kirby, Parilla, & Pfeiffer, 2003; Muter, Hulme, Snowling, & Stevenson, 2004; Nithart et al., 2011); however, less emphasis has been placed on predictors in French immersion (Jared, 2008). This

knowledge is especially important in Canada where French immersion is often employed in the education system to help children become fluent in both of Canada's official languages. This section continues with a discussion of definitions and previous research regarding early literacy concepts and the importance of the home environment in relation to bilingualism. The chapter concludes with an outline of the current study.

Bilingualism and French Immersion in Canada

French immersion was first introduced in St. Lambert, Quebec in 1965 (Genesee & Jared, 2008). This initiative was fueled by the lobbying efforts of a group of English speaking parents in Quebec who recognized the importance of French fluency and felt that their French education did not provide adequate speaking abilities, which then limited their capacity to work or socialize adequately in French (Swain, 1997). Therefore, immersion was developed to foster French language skills by adopting French as the method to teach other academic subjects instead of French itself being the focus of the lesson (Hammerly, 1989). This new program was designed so that children beginning in kindergarten received full instruction in French. These students also learned to read in French first, with English instruction being introduced after Grade 2. As French immersion spread across the country during the 1970s and 1980s (Makropoulos, 2010), different variations in the format of the program emerged to meet concerns of parents, particularly loss of proficiency in the first language and lack of proficiency in the second language (Swain, 1997). The current models of education include early, middle, and late immersion.

Early immersion was the first type of program developed (Genesee & Jared, 2008). As described previously, this program provides French instruction at the outset of school attendance.

These early programs generally begin with full French instruction and gradually introduce English instruction. Middle and late immersion programs are an option available later in elementary school to students who are enrolled in English programs. Middle immersion programs provide equal instruction in both English and French and are generally offered in Grades 4 and 5. Late French immersion programs are generally offered to students in Grades 7 and 8, providing three quarters French education for those years (Makropoulos, 2010).

In 2004, a poll conducted by the Centre for Research and Information on Canada (CRIC) indicated that 74% of Canadians outside of Quebec stated it is important for their children to learn a second language (Parkin & Turcotte, 2004). From the period of 1991/1992 to 2010/2011, the number of students attending French immersion programs in Canada increased from 267 000 to 341 000 and the overall rate of English-French bilingualism increased from 12.2% to 17.5% of the population (Statistics Canada, 2013). In 2011, 99.7% of households in Sudbury Ontario reported speaking English at home on a regular basis and 78.8% of households reported speaking French at home on a regular basis (Statistics Canada, 2012).

Many benefits of French immersion education have been identified. Economic benefits include increased occupational earning power in Canada. As Jedwab (2004) points out, the economic advantages are not uniform across the country, with less considerable gaps in earning power occurring in areas where fewer people speak both official languages.

Many cognitive and linguistic benefits of bilingualism have also been recognized. Cognitive benefits include divergent thinking, creativity, and mental flexibility (Baker, 2007, 2011; MacNab, 1979; Peal & Lambert, 1962; Ricciardelli, 1992). Bilingualism also appears to

impart metalinguistic advantages that emerge gradually in children enrolled in immersion (Bialystok, Peets, & Moreno, 2012). Research has indicated that the cognitive advantages of bilingualism may be influenced by the earlier emergence of metalinguistic awareness (see Lazaruk, 2007 for a review). Some researchers have also suggested that bilingualism may reduce age-related declines in cognitive control processes and provide protection from conditions such as dementia and Alzheimer's (Bialystok, 2011; Gold, Kim, Johnson, Kryscio, & Smith, 2013).

Research regarding French immersion programs has demonstrated that this instruction both allows for the development of proficiency in French and does not have a lasting negative impact on first language English skills (Churchill, 2003; Genesee, 1987; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Swain & Lapkin, 1982). In fact, French immersion students have been found to perform equal to or better than English program students (e.g., Genesee, 2004; Turnbull, Lapkin, & Hart, 2001). However, in order to understand reading acquisition in second language learners, it is important to first examine the process amongst monolingual populations.

Emergent Literacy

Before formal schooling begins, children are exposed to language and literacy in the home (Bennett, Weigel & Martin, 2002) and the environment provided by parents becomes the foundation for later learning. Preschool skills are linked to later reading achievement and evidence exists that links weak preschool reading skills to continued reading difficulty in later grades (Francis et al., 1996). Therefore, the possibility of utilizing early indicators as predictors of later achievement and their role in intervention are of particular interest. The development of literacy skills commences prior to formal academic instruction through experiences encountered in the home and may include games, songs, and even daily conversation (Landry & Smith,

2006). These activities may include formal teaching by the parent or more informal shared experiences (Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006). Although the focus in this literature has been how literacy is achieved by monolingual populations, it has also examined how literacy in a second language is achieved when it is not a regular part of the home environment.

Cross-Language Transfer

Cross language transfer is the idea that the knowledge and experience an individual has in their native language affects the processes of acquiring a second language and, therefore, skills in one language can predict achievement in the second language (Commissaire, Duncan, & Casalis, 2011). Cross language transfer can be viewed as either harmful, because habits developed in the first language are difficult to overcome, or helpful, because knowledge and skills from the first language are used to facilitate second language acquisition. From the first standpoint, cross-transfer can hinder the progress of acquiring the second language, but it has also been argued that cross language transfer can help an individual acquire a second language (Snow, 2006). For example, phonological awareness, or the ability to recognize units of sound in spoken words (Stahl & Murray, 1994), is a skill that can promote reading between languages (Comeau, Cormier, Grandmaison, & Lacroix, 1999; Deacon, Wade-Woolley, & Kirby, 2009).

In a meta-analysis conducted by Melby-Lervag and Lervag (2011), it was found that there were small but significant correlations between oral language (vocabulary and listening comprehension) in first and second languages ($r = .16$). A moderate correlation ($r = .63$) was also found between phonological awareness in first and second languages. Furthermore, the authors found a significant moderate correlation between decoding in the first and second languages ($r = .49$); however, in studies with participants who were concurrently instructed in both languages

these variables had higher correlations than in those studies where participants were instructed in the second language alone. Furthermore, when the first and second languages shared alphabetic orthography, correlations were higher. English and French are closely related (Deacon et al., 2009) because they have similar linguistic origins and share the same alphabet. Therefore, it is likely that cross-language transfer occurs between them.

Deacon et al. (2009) investigated cross-linguistic transfer among 76 Grade 2 students in a French immersion program. They assessed reading skills in French and English, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and orthographic processing. Orthographic processing is related to the visual look of the letters in a written word and refers to the ability to “form, store, and access orthographic representations” (Stanovich & Weist, 1989, page 404). Deacon et al. (2009) found significant correlations between reading measures in French and English and also that all measures were significantly correlated with the Woodcock Word Identification Test. All English measures except English vocabulary were related to the French reading measure. Utilizing regression procedures, the authors also demonstrated that there was bidirectional cross-language transfer among orthographic processing.

It has been established that the students enrolled in early immersion do not perform as well on measures of English reading comprehension and vocabulary in the early grades (e.g. Barik & Swain, 1975; Genesee, 1978). However, this discrepancy subsides after two or three years of English instruction (Hammerly, 1989). Turnbull et al. (2001) examined the performance of French immersion and English students on the 1998-1999 exams managed by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). The EQAO is a mandatory, Ontario wide, curriculum based testing program that focuses on evaluation of reading, writing, and

mathematics of students in Grades 3 and 6. The results of the study indicated that French immersion students were more likely to achieve levels 3 (provincial standard) and 4 (exceeding provincial standard) on reading and writing than English students. Fifty five percent of French immersion students scored in this range compared to 48% of students in the English program. It is important to note that immersion students who had received some instruction in English performed as well as English students on the EQAO in Grade 3. The results among Grade 6 students yielded similar results. In reading, the French immersion students were again more likely to obtain scores of level 3 or 4 than those in the English program. Seventy one percent of students in French immersion were within this range compared to 51% of students in the English program (Lapkin, Hart, & Turnbull, 2003).

In light of the cross-language transfer literature, these findings are not surprising. English children in French immersion tend to lag behind their English regular program peers in English language skills, but only until English education commences (Genesee & Jared, 2008). Given that English and French share their alphabet and have many similar words because of similar linguistic origins, research shows that skills acquired in one language will transfer to the other. French immersion is designed for students whose first language is not French and French immersion students are exposed to their first language, generally English, as a first language in the home environment (Canadian Council on Learning, 2007).

The Home Environment

The importance of acquiring reading ability has driven the development of many theories regarding how literacy is achieved. Numerous studies have been conducted regarding the influences of various factors on literacy. The influence of the home environment on these skills

is especially of interest because most children first encounter literacy at home (Bennett et al., 2002; Neumann & Neumann, 2009). The skills that children possess prior to school entry provide the basis for later literacy skills; however, research demonstrates that the linguistic environment can be vastly different between families (Scarborough, 2002). For example, Hart and Risely (1995) report that children from families of higher socio-economic status heard three times more words than children from families with lower socio-economic status before these children turned three. In another study, Pan, Rowe, Singer, and Snow (2005) found that in 10 minutes of interaction with their mother, 36 month old children from families with low income children averaged 73 word types in contrast to 84 words produced by 32 month old children from middle class families. If children are not exposed to a particular word, they cannot learn it (Hoff, 2006). Furthermore, when home based literacy activities correspond to school based literacy activities, it is associated with higher school based reading achievement (Pellegrini, 2002). In other words, when parents are engaging in the same activities at home that their children are engaging in at school, their children's reading achievement is higher at school. Other factors have been identified that also affect the literacy environment, such as maternal depression and stress level (Karrass, VanDeventer, & Braungart-Rieker, 2003; Pan et al., 2005; Sohr-Preston & Scaramella, 2006). Furthermore, we know that children with deficits in language skills are at a higher risk for difficulties in other academic areas as reading becomes the process through which learning occurs (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) and that these differences are stable over time (Scarborough, 2002). Therefore, the importance of the home environment cannot be understated.

Current research highlights the relationship between the home environment and later reading achievement. Factors that have been shown to have a significant relationship with later literacy ability include parent-child shared reading (Bus et al., 1995; Evans et al., 2003; Hindman & Morrison, 2012; Neumann & Neumann, 2009; Stadler & McEvoy, 2003) and parental beliefs and practices regarding literacy (Bingham, 2007; Hindman & Morrison, 2012; Weigel et al., 2006; Skibbe et al., 2008). These parental beliefs and practices may have a differential effect on literacy development (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000; Evans, Shaw, & Bell, 2000; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2001; Sénéchal et al., 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). These effects of the home environment on reading have also been extended to include populations such as families who have children with Down syndrome (Ricci, 2011) and those families whose children have cochlear implants (DesJardin, Ambrose, & Eisenberg, 2011).

Scarborough, Dobrich, and Hagar (1991) conducted a longitudinal study examining the relationship between parental reading frequency, children's solitary reading activities, parent-child shared reading, and reading ability in second graders. One hundred and twelve parents of 56 preschoolers were asked about adult reading habits, shared parent-child reading, and children's interest in books in an interview. Parent child reading and the time children spent independently with books were both found to contribute significantly to Grade 2 reading achievement, thereby demonstrating the importance of home literacy practices in later reading achievement.

In another study, Payne, Whitehurst and Angell (1994) examined the influence of the home environment on the language skills of children. Factors that were evaluated included the frequency and duration of parent-child reading, frequency of time the child spent with books

independently, age when parents first read to their child, number of books to which the child had access, frequency of library visits, and the degree to which parents enjoyed reading. In this study, the variance predicted in child language scores was 12-18%. It should also be noted that the effect of frequency of shared reading between parents and preschoolers has been shown to be independent of socioeconomic status. In their meta-analysis, Bus et al. (1995) showed that although literacy levels were lower on average among families with less resources, shared reading frequency still impacted these children's literacy skills.

Despite the clear importance of the home environment in literacy, parents have different perspectives regarding their role in terms of supporting their child's literacy development (Bus et al., 1995). Parental attitudes toward literacy learning vary from shouldering the entire responsibility of actively teaching their children to the feeling that their children should be taught to read solely by educators (DeBruin-Parecki, 2008). Parents who do not find reading pleasurable themselves may also have difficulty supporting their child's reading (Bus et al., 1995) and among parents who do read with their child, there may be variation in the method. For example, Evans et al. (2003) looked at the level of scaffolding during shared-reading among families. The authors found that various approaches, such as providing the full word to a child or helping them sound out phonemes, differentially supported later reading achievement.

The importance of the home environment in regard to vocabulary development was illustrated in a study by Hermanto, Moreno, and Bialystok (2012) which examined vocabulary development among students from a French private school whose primary home language was not French. They found that measures of English receptive vocabulary utilizing the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (Dunn & Dunn, 1997) were higher in both Grades 2 and 5 than an

adapted French version, Echelle de Vocabulaire en Images Peabody (Dunn, Theriault-Whalen, & Dunn, 1993). Furthermore, there were similar results in a category fluency test where children were asked to name as many items which belong to a category as they could within an allotted time frame. These results speak to the language gains made by the children in their home language relative to the language utilized at school and demonstrate that the home environment plays an important role in vocabulary development.

Vocabulary and the Home Environment

Reading successfully requires not only decoding skills, but also knowledge of the meaning behind words in order to comprehend the text. An individual's vocabulary is the set of words in a language that individuals are familiar with and know the meaning of (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005). There is evidence that by the time children reach Grade 2, they already know 5200 root words (Biemiller & Slonim, 2001) and this number increases to approximately 10 000 root words by Grade 5 (Anglin, 1993). As might be expected, knowing the meanings of words is important in reading comprehension (Muter et al., 2004). In fact, a vocabulary deficit may result in having the ability to decode words but not the ability to comprehend the passage (Lescaux & Kieffer, 2010; Scarborough, 2002; Silverman & Crandall, 2010).

An individual's vocabulary has been shown to be a consistent predictor of reading achievement (Daneman, 1991; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) and is known to differ between children even before school enrollment (Hart & Risley, 1995; Rowe, Raudenbush, & Goldin-Meadow, 2012). Because schooling may not contribute substantially to a child's vocabulary development without direct instruction (Anglin, 1993; Christian, Morrison, Frazier, & Massetti, 2000), the home environment may become the primary

place where vocabulary is learned. Children acquire language largely through the language they hear (Hoff, 2006). Therefore, when children are exposed to rich language usage in their environment, they are more likely to learn how to utilize this rich language themselves (Hoff & Naigles, 2002). For example, in a study of the relationship between exposure to maternal speech and vocabulary development, it was found that vocabulary size in children aged 14-26 months was significantly related to the amount of parental speech (Huttenlocher, Haight, Bryk, Seltzer, & Lyons, 1991). Specifically, when mothers spoke more to their toddlers they tended to have more vocabulary. As previously discussed, research demonstrates that children from less advantaged homes hear far fewer words throughout their childhood than children from advantaged homes (Hart & Risley, 1995; Hoff, 2006) and this difference in exposure may be responsible for the discrepancy between large and small vocabularies (White, Graves, & Slater, 1990).

Vocabulary has been shown to improve with reading aloud, combined with explanation of the meaning of some words (Biemiller, & Boote, 2006; Brabham, & Lynch-Brown, 2002; Brett, Rothlein, & Hurley, 1996). There is some evidence that oral reading and vocabulary explanations foster comprehension gains (Morrow, 1992). Furthermore, given that children who are poor readers tend to read less, their exposure to new words is also reduced, and consequently, they demonstrate a more limited vocabulary (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). This pattern has the potential to result in compounded comprehension difficulties as these children lag behind their peers (Stanovich, 1986) and therefore exposure to vocabulary in the home environment is key.

Formal and Informal Activities in the Home: Home Literacy Model

Shared parent-child reading has been accepted as a predictor of early literacy skills (see review in Adams, 1990; meta-analysis Bus et al., 1995; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994); however, other methods of interacting with children also contribute to literacy development as well. Sénéchal et al. (1998) argued that parent-child reading and teaching of literacy skills may be independent of each other and may also be differentially related to literacy skills.

The Home Literacy Model (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002) proposes that two types of literacy experiences at home have different influences on the development of literacy skills: formal and informal. Formal literacy activities are ones in which children are taught about the mechanics of language and include parents directly teaching about language. Informal literacy activities are more related to the message contained in the print, not language mechanics, and include storybook exposure. In other words, informal literacy activities seem to be more related to engaging in literacy practices with a focus on enjoyment rather than structured learning. This model proposes that parent teaching about language, as a formal literacy activity, is predictive of early literacy skills such as alphabet knowledge or early decoding, and that informal activities are not predictive of these skills. Informal literacy activities, such as shared reading, are predictive of vocabulary and indirectly related to phonological awareness, while formal activities are not. Furthermore, the Home Literacy Model suggests that exposure to books is indirectly related to later reading comprehension. However, parental engagement in one type of activity is not related to their engagement in the other. Families also participate in different literacy activities with their child (Evans et al., 2000; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2001). While one family may practice shared reading every night but not directly teach their children how to write words,

another family may have an opposite routine. Differences between families do not end here. Parents also have varied ideas about their role in literacy teaching (Evans et al., 2000) and how literacy should be taught (DeBaryshe et al., 2000).

Sénéchal and LeFevre (2001) examined the differential impact of family literacy activity on literacy skill development. They divided children into four groups based on the amount of story book exposure and amount of reported parental teaching about literacy by dividing each at the median. Children whose parents reported reading story books often and teaching literacy skills often comprised the high teach, high read group. Children whose parents reported teaching literacy frequently but did not report reading story books frequently were grouped into a high-teach, low read group. Children whose parents indicated they did not teach literacy skills often but read story books often comprised the low-teach, high read group. Finally, children whose parents reported not teaching literacy often and not reading story books often were grouped into the low-teach, low-read group. The children in this study were followed from Grades 1 through 3 and differing literacy patterns emerged for the groups.

Sénéchal and LeFevre (2001) found that frequently reported shared reading in conjunction with frequent literacy teaching was associated with higher achievement scores. Parents in the high teach-high read group had children who performed better than all other groups in achievement scores by Grade 3. Children whose parents taught frequently but engaged in shared reading performed better than those whose parents engaged in shared reading more frequently than teaching in Grade 1; however the reverse was true by Grade 3. At this time, the low-teach high-read group performed better than the high-teach low-read group. From the results

of this study, it can be concluded that both sets of activities, both shared-reading and direct teaching of literacy skills, are important to the development of literacy skills.

Parental reports of teaching literacy skills to children are associated with higher scores in literacy performance. For example, Haney and Hill (2004) found that parental reports of teaching literacy activities were related to consistently higher scores in vocabulary, alphabet knowledge, and concepts about print. Furthermore, specific teaching was associated with specific outcomes. For instance, children who were being taught how to write words scored better on alphabet knowledge and decoding. Similarly, Evans et al. (2000) reported that parental teaching was associated with higher scores on alphabet knowledge and phonological sensitivity than was shared reading. These studies further support the value of direct teaching of literacy skills to support the development of early literacy skills. Therefore, these studies illustrate that both formal and informal activities are worthy of examination as unique contributors with differential influential pathways to overall reading achievement.

LeFevre and Sénéchal (2002) applied the home literacy model to children in Early French Immersion through a longitudinal study. They investigated whether this model applied to children learning a second language. The results indicated that, in English, the model predicted outcomes based on formal and informal activities. In French, formal and informal literacy activities predicted French emergent literacy. LeFevre and Sénéchal (2003) examined home literacy experiences among children in Early French Immersion through kindergarten to Grade 3. The frequency of both formal and informal literacy activities were measured by parent report. Informal literacy activities measured included reading to children at bedtime and frequency of visiting the library to borrow children's books. Formal literacy activities included teaching

children to read words and teaching children to spell words. It was found that parents reported more frequently engaging in English home literacy activities whether formal or informal. While both formal and informal activity levels in English remained fairly consistent over time, home literacy activities in French became more frequent over time, with the exception of reading at bedtime. This increasing trend continues through each Grade until it matched English by Grade 2.

Bilingualism and the Home Environment

Although there have been many studies examining the effect of home environment on literacy in monolingual populations, less emphasis has been placed on bilingual populations. In 2007, Kalia investigated the relationship between parents' book reading practices on English oral language, narrative and literacy skill development in children learning English as a second language. This study was conducted in India and the languages parents reported being spoken at home included English, Malayalam, Kannada, Oriya, Urdu, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Bangla, and Gujrati. Forty-five percent of families spoke both English and an Indian language at home. The home literacy environment was assessed utilizing a home questionnaire, which included questions about the frequency of parent-child reading, the frequency of visits to the library, and the number of books available to their children. In addition, parents were asked which book titles they were familiar with from a checklist of common children's books with foils. The children were measured on print concepts, receptive vocabulary, and phonological awareness using the blending and elision measures of the Preschool Comprehensive Test of Phonological and Print Processing. All measures were administered in English. Results of this study indicated that receptive vocabulary scores were positively correlated with concepts of print, blending and

elision measures. Furthermore, the frequency of visits to the library was correlated with scores of syntax and narrative complexity when children were asked to generate a story based on pictures. The checklist of children's titles was also positively correlated with print concepts, phonological awareness, complexity of syntax, and complexity of narrative. This study provides support for the importance of the home environment and book exposure associated with development of receptive vocabulary and the ability to produce complex narrative in bilingual populations.

Similar findings were also reported by Uchikoshi (2006), who studied the effects of the educational television programs *Arthur*, and *Between the Lions*, preschool attendance, and the home literacy environment on the vocabulary scores of second language English learners whose native language was Spanish. The number of books available to children was found to be predictive of receptive language scores in this study, further supporting the importance of the home environment in vocabulary development. Patterson (2002) examined the relationship between expressive vocabulary, frequency of shared reading, and frequency of watching television in 64 bilingual 2 year olds. In this study, the titles checklist was found to be significantly related to print concepts, measures of phonological sensitivity, and oral language skills, also suggesting that the home environment is important in bilingual children's language development.

The majority of immersion studies that have been conducted in the United States have focused on Spanish speakers attending English immersion. This immersion is different from French immersion in Canada in numerous ways. In the United States, English immersion is not optional for recent immigrants who are often of low socio-economic status and whose minority native language is not perceived to be as valuable as learning the majority language (i.e.,

English). Therefore, learning English is considered necessary to succeed (see August & Shanahan, 2006 for a review of language-minority second language learning). In addition, parental ability, interest, and motivation to assist their children in achieving proficiency in English is often underestimated by schools offering these programs (Goldenberg, Rueda & August, 2006).

In contrast, Canadian parents opt to have their children enrolled in French immersion for their future benefit and enrollment has been associated with social class (Lamarre, 1997). In 1983, Olson and Burns argued that there exists a social class bias among parents who choose French immersion for their children. Specifically, Olson and Burns (1983) argued that parents who choose French immersion have a higher socio-economic status and educational attainment than parents who choose the English program. Guttman (1983) stated that, although French immersion may interest more motivated parents because it is optional, the program did not preclude families of lower socioeconomic status. More recently, Lamarre (1997) conducted a study comparing French immersion in Montreal and Vancouver. In Montreal, where immersion programs are considered the regular school program because of popularity and prevalence, the student population was comprised of equal proportions of middle and working class backgrounds. In contrast, families who enrolled their children in French immersion in Vancouver, where French immersion is less available, tended to be middle or upper class. The results of Lamarre's (1997) study indicate that social class bias may depend on the social context of the area and accessibility of French immersion. Further, research has indicated that immigrant families who choose to enroll their children in French immersion are diverse in their

socioeconomic status (Dagenais & Jacquet, 2000). Therefore, although predictors of reading achievement may be similar, there is merit in further investigation due to contextual differences.

The study of parental role and the home environment in bilingual populations is important in Canada where proficiency in English and French is valued and encouraged. French immersion was first introduced in 1965 in a single school in Montreal, Quebec (Genesee & Jared, 2008). This program was designed to provide students with English parents the opportunity to become bilingual through French instruction in school. Despite the large number of children enrolled in French immersion programs, there have been limited studies conducted that have focused on predictors of reading development among French immersion students (Genesee & Jared, 2008; MacCoubrey, Wade-Woolley, Klinger, & Kirby, 2004) or on parent involvement in academics.

Parental Involvement in Academics: The Parent Involvement Model

The benefits of parent involvement have been studied through both correlational and intervention studies and include increased achievement in mathematics (Izzo, Weissberg, Kasprow, & Fendrich, 1999; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005; Starkey & Klein, 2000), reading (Izzo et al., 1999; Jordan, Snow, & Porche, 2000; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Sénéchal & Young, 2008; Zellman & Waterman, 1998), as well as higher rates of homework completion (Cancio, West, & Young, 2004; Patall, Cooper, & Robinson, 2008). The influence of parent involvement on achievement is also supported by meta-analyses (e.g. Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2005).

Parental involvement has other benefits as well. In the literature it has been associated with greater behavioural self-regulation (Brody, Flor & Gibson, 1999; Kratochwill, McDonald, Levin, Bear-Tibbetts, & Demaray, 2004; Pantin et al., 2003) and increased social skills

(McWayne, Hampton, Fantuzzo, Cohen, & Sekino, 2004). There is also evidence that children of more involved parents are less likely to drop out (Barnard, 2004; Rumberger, 1995), are more likely to graduate (Anguiano, 2004; Barnard, 2004), and are more likely to have achieved a higher level of education (Barnard, 2004; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004).

A model of parent involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005) was developed to examine parental involvement from parent perspectives and tested with parents who had children enrolled in the American public elementary school system (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007). Specifically, the authors asked why parents become involved and how they choose to become involved in their child's education. This model proposes that three factors influence parental decisions to become involved. The first is parents' motivational beliefs that include parental role construction and parental self-efficacy in terms of their ability to help their children with their work. The second factor is parents' perceptions of invitations for involvement from others including teachers, their child and invitations from the school in general. Lastly, parents' perceived life context, including self-perceived time and energy as well as self-perceived skills and knowledge influence parent involvement according to this model.

Within the parent involvement model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Walker et al., 2005), parental role construction refers to parental attitudes and beliefs about their responsibilities in relation to their child's education and the behaviours that result from these beliefs. The authors contend that this role is constructed from numerous sources including the practices of their own parents, observations of other parents, and the expectations of important individuals and groups. Role construction is also influenced by parental beliefs about child

development and appropriate parenting practices, including how parents should support their children academically. Hoover and Dempsey (1997) also suggest that the role construction is dynamic and may change in response to experiences related to involvement and changes in social conditions. This constructed role then serves to help parents to imagine and engage in activities that are education-oriented.

A considerable amount of empirical support exists in the literature regarding the influence of role construction on parent involvement (e.g., Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Drummond & Stipek, 2004; Grolnick et al., 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Agreement exists that parents tend to be more involved in their children's education when parents believe they should have a more active role (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Gutman & McLoyd, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Sheldon, 2002). However, the belief that it falls within a parent's role to support children academically may not be enough to facilitate that behaviour in isolation.

The second aspect of parents' motivational beliefs according to the parent involvement model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997, Walker et al., 2005) is a sense of self efficacy. That is, in addition to believing that helping is their role, parents must also feel capable of helping their child succeed academically. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) suggest that this confidence draws its source from their previous involvement experience, their perception of how other parents are involved in activities, having been persuaded by others that involvement is important and worthwhile, and the degree to which parents are emotionally aroused in relation to their children's academic success. However, the feeling that it is a parental duty to help and the confidence to help may not be enough to foster action if the opportunity to help does not exist as well.

The decision to become involved is also dependent on the perceived opportunities provided by the teacher, school, or child to do so (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997, Walker et al., 2005). These opportunities, or expectations, may take the form of volunteer opportunities at school, helping with homework, involvement in school community, or taking part in decisions made regarding the school itself (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). Opportunities for parental involvement may be created through parent-teacher telephone calls, eagerness of the child to discuss school day activities, and invitations to attend school meetings.

Therefore, according to this model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997, Walker et al., 2005), the degree of parent involvement in academic work is influenced by the parent's role as they perceive it, how qualified they feel to help their child succeed, reports of success or failure from others who engage in involvement activities, and the invitations they receive to do so. The type of involvement that parents choose to engage in is then derived from the knowledge, skills and abilities they have obtained from these sources. The specific way a parent becomes involved is influenced by the skill, abilities, and knowledge possessed by parents. For example, a parent who feels more capable in one academic subject is more likely to help their child with that subject than another they do not feel comfortable with. Other factors that are likely to affect an involvement decision include family demands and other responsibilities that require time and energy investments.

Rationale for the Current Study

Literacy is an important skill for success in our modern day society (Blake & Blake, 2002). Individuals who do not achieve literacy are at risk of academic failure (Desrochers & Maor, 2008), developing a negative attitude toward reading (Kaniuka, 2010), and being unable to

develop reading comprehension strategies (Allington, 1984). These reading and comprehension difficulties compound over time (Stanovich, 1986). In other words, as their peers continue to grow because of knowledge they are acquiring through reading, the children who are struggling with comprehension are further left behind because they are missing the opportunity to learn through reading. This process also begins early in life; those who struggle in Grade 1 are already at a higher risk of failing to graduate high school and pursue further education (Entwisle et al., 2005).

The influence of the home environment has been a focus of study for many decades, perhaps because this environment is the first place children encounter literacy (Bennett et al., 2002; Neumann & Neumann, 2009). The pre-literacy skills that children develop provide the foundation for later literacy; however, research has demonstrated that the environment can differ substantially between families (Scarborough, 2002). Much of the existing literature focuses on the emergence of these pre-literacy skills in monolingual populations (e.g., Bus et al., 1995; Payne et al., 1994) and less is known about how the home environment impacts bilingual populations. Therefore, this is an area which requires further investigation.

Although shared reading has been the traditional focus of studies examining the home influence on reading achievement (see review in Adams, 1990; meta-analysis by Bus et al., 1995; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994), other studies have focused on different components of this environment that contribute to literacy development. For example, Sénéchal et al. (1998) argued that the literacy activities in which families engage can be broken into formal and informal literacy activities. Furthermore, Sénéchal et al. (1998) suggested that engagement in one of these components of literacy activities is not dependent on engagement in the other. In other words,

families may be involved in formal literacy activities, informal literacy activities, a combination of the two, or none at all.

Although studies have examined the influence of the home environment on literacy utilizing quantitative measures, a review of the literature did not reveal past studies that explored the experiences of parents who have children in French immersion.

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the experience of families who have a child enrolled in the French immersion program as compared to families who have a child enrolled in the English program. Specifically, this study focused on determining the type of literacy activities parents and children engaged in as well as the qualities of reading, such as enjoyment of reading and when and how reading occurs. This study builds upon existing evidence of parental contribution by investigating the relationships between shared reading, parental teaching about language, and the experience of families in the programs. This study employed mixed methodology through in-depth parent interviews and questionnaires to determine how, as their children progress through school, teaching and reading strategies change at home. Furthermore, this study investigated whether reading differed in French and English in logistical or emotional qualities.

The rich information provided by parents in terms of qualitative interviewing contributes to the existing literature by giving voice to the issues parents face in French immersion education. This information can, in turn, be employed by policy makers and educational professionals to support the family in literacy development and French language acquisition. The qualitative aspect of this study sets it apart from those that already exist in the literature.

Although many surveys have been conducted in relation to French immersion and parental concerns, to the author's knowledge qualitative methods have not been employed examining this issue in more depth.

Research Questions

This study focused on the following research questions:

1. What factors do parents consider when deciding to enroll their children in English and French immersion?
2. How do parents experience having a child in a French immersion program and how does this experience compare to the English program experience?
3. What are the differences in reading in French and in English among families with children in French immersion?

Reflexivity

One of the most salient aspects of qualitative research is that the researcher becomes the tool through which data is collected and analyzed (Merriam, 2009). Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) describe the researcher as viewing the participant's experience through their own unique lens. In other words, the researcher must make decisions about how to interpret and present the voices of the participants (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). Merriam (2009) states that providing a critical reflection on the researcher's biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research provides the reader a greater understanding of how they will influence the development of the study and the conclusions drawn. Therefore, reflexivity is a way to communicate critical self-reflection that alerts the reader to the ways that the researcher's own beliefs, interests and

experiences influences the interpretation of the data, and that the interpretation was conducted from that particular perspective (King & Horrocks, 2010). To create a greater transparency in this study, I will acknowledge my personal experiences regarding school enrollment and literacy below.

Personal and Academic Experiences with Literacy and Education

When it came time to register my son in school I was faced with the decision of enrolling him in an English or French immersion program. I had never really considered which program he would be enrolled in, and the decision was far more involved than I had anticipated. Although we had no French speaking family, I considered many factors including what would provide him the best opportunities and I began to wonder if this experience was something that all families shared. I began to question whether other parents were experiencing making the decision in the same way that I was. Eventually, I decided to enroll my son in the English program because he was behind in his speech development. I was concerned about his English language development and worried that placing him in an environment where French was spoken the majority of the day would hamper his success in school. As I completed this project, I was aware that this experience had to be kept in check as I listened to the stories that other parents shared. Furthermore, having a child enrolled in an English program may have influenced my ability to recognize the level of importance that parents in French immersion attribute to specific themes. I approached this analysis without any experience with French immersion and therefore, from the outside looking in. However, to safeguard against this issue, techniques such as member checking were employed to ensure the validity of the qualitative results.

Parental involvement in education has always held an interest for me. As a child, my family was always involved in my education in some way. Our academic achievements were celebrated, and we were always encouraged to pursue opportunities for further learning. I remember my mother and grandmother staying up late to help me to put the finishing touches on many elementary school projects. Even into my university education, I sought their feedback on papers I had written. They have always been involved in my education, and specifically homework, as long as I can remember. As I considered the path which I thought would be best for my son, I wondered how things would have been different had my mother chosen to enrol me in French immersion. As an Anglophone parent, her contributions and involvement in my education may have been limited. I wondered how this would have impacted my academic outcome and her perceptions of the parental role. Having a family background where academics and parental involvement in homework was emphasized, I may be more sensitive to these themes.

Shared reading has been, in my family, an enjoyable past time. I have memories of my mother reading with my sister and me, immersing us in a world of fairy tales before slipping into dreams. When my son was born, not only did I engage in this practice, but I watched as my mother continued the tradition by reading with him when they were together. I began to wonder what role these activities played in later reading achievement. I wondered whether our practices would be the same had he been enrolled in the French immersion program.

During my undergraduate degree, I first learned about how children begin to read in a developmental psychology course. I was intrigued by the idea that, although children are taught to read in school, they must learn about reading at home first (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). I

was introduced to the Home Literacy Model (Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002) and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 1997) model of parental involvement. I was fascinated by the influence of parents on literacy achievement.

In writing this paper, my intention was to investigate parental involvement in terms of the home literacy environment among families with elementary school children enrolled in French immersion and English programs. I wanted to dig deeper into the reading practices and perceptions of families, into homework and parental involvement. I wanted to understand the experience parents were having with their children's education. As far as I am aware, no similar investigation has been conducted with English program and French immersion families. In conducting this study, I acknowledge that I support parental involvement in their children's education and engagement in shared home literacy activities as a family past-time.

Method

This study was conducted as part of a larger longitudinal mixed methods research investigation examining the relationship between early literacy skills and later reading achievement. The primary purpose of this portion of the study was to examine the experiences of families regarding literacy practices in the home and the experiences of families in both English and French immersion programs. A mixed methods approach was employed to gain a greater understanding of the data.

Mixed method investigations have become more widely utilized in recent years (Creswell, 2010). The benefits of mixed method projects include the ability to integrate qualitative and quantitative data, which strengthens both understanding of and confidence in conclusions (Greene & Hall, 2010; Lieber & Weisner, 2010). The purpose of the mixed methods triangulation design is to answer the research questions through the collection of two independent sets of data, which together provide a better understanding of the phenomenon under examination (Morse, 1991). This design is the most common mixed methods design and serves to combine the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods while limiting their weaknesses. For example, qualitative data collection is influenced by researcher attitudes and bias while quantitative methods are not as susceptible to influence (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). This study is a basic qualitative study (Merriam, 2009) that employs mixed methodology with the overall goal of understanding the experience of families in their respective language programs and literacy practices.

Participants

This study exists as part of a larger longitudinal project that began in Sudbury, Ontario in 2010. Letters were sent home through schools in the Rainbow District Public School Board, which offers programs in English and early French immersion, requesting participation in the larger, longitudinal study. Data regarding literacy activities and reading achievement were gathered from children in their junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten years of schooling. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 27 parents who had children in junior kindergarten (11 English program; 16 French immersion program) and 14 parents with children in senior kindergarten (1 English program; 13 French immersion program). As the larger project continued, recruitment letters were again sent home to parents of children, now in Grade 2, requesting participation in the next phase of reading achievement measures in the spring of 2011.

The families who participated in reading achievement measures in 2011 were sent parental questionnaires and an invitation to participate in semi-structured interviews that examined home literacy practices in more depth. This Grade 2 data, as well as data from the junior and senior kindergarten interviews conducted in 2010 (Lysynchuk, Watson, & Levin, 2010) are the focus of this study. Thirty two questionnaires were distributed to families with children in Grade 2 and 18 completed questionnaires were returned (56% return rate; 9 English program, 9 French immersion program). The questionnaires were primarily completed by mothers (12), followed by fathers (4) and other guardians (2).

In addition to previous interviews with families who had children in junior and senior kindergarten, interviews were conducted with a total of eight families who had children in Grade 2. Five families with children from the English program (four mothers and two custodial

grandmothers) and three families with children in the French immersion program (two mothers and one father) participated. These parents were drawn from the same participant pool as the previous interviewees with children in senior kindergarten and, therefore, may have been interviewed in both their child's senior kindergarten and Grade 2 years. Due to the way data were coded to protect participant confidentiality there is no way to verify whether parents had been previously interviewed. However; no parents with children in Grade 2 who were interviewed mentioned having been interviewed previously. Parent reported income averaged approximately \$116 000 in the English program and \$140 000 in the French immersion program, but not all parents provided information regarding their socioeconomic status. These schools are located in "middle-class" neighbourhoods.

Approval for the project was granted by the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board (Appendix A) as well as the Rainbow District School Board in Sudbury, Ontario. Informed consent was obtained from all participants in this study through use of consent forms. Two consent forms were utilized in this study, one for the questionnaire portion of the study (Appendix B) and the second for the interview portion of the study (Appendix C).

Measures

For the purposes of this study, data were gathered in two primary ways. A semi-structured interview was utilized to explore the experiences families have had in the English and French immersion program including literacy practices. The home literacy questionnaire was designed to examine the kinds of literacy activities and how often families were engaging in them. These two methods of data collection are described below.

Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews (see Appendix D for full interview guide) were developed to explore the experiences of families with children in the English and French immersion program and their home literacy practices. The interview schedule consisted of 20 open-ended questions that were based on previous versions of the interview for the larger project (Lysynchuk et al., 2010) and was informed by both the home literacy model (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002) and the parent involvement model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997). Sample questions included: “Can you describe your child’s experience in the program?” and “What types of things might you do while you are reading with your child?” Parents were contacted by telephone or email and an appointment was scheduled based on mutual availability. Interviews were conducted in a place chosen by the parent, and included coffee shops, work places, and the family home. Interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. They were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Confidentiality of the participants in the study was protected by changing identifying information such as the names and other information that may pose a risk to anonymity. The privacy of the participants was ensured by allowing them to choose the location of the interview and allowing them to be free of the pressure to disclose information that they may not have felt comfortable disclosing. To this end, participants were reminded verbally that they had the option of skipping questions that made them feel uncomfortable, and that they had the option of declining audio recording of the interview. No participant appeared uncomfortable during the interview, but topics that were perceived by the researcher to be of a possibly sensitive nature did emerge and were not probed; the information was not directly related to the phenomenon under

investigation. Participants also controlled the length of the interview and could take breaks at any time.

Home Literacy Questionnaire

The home literacy questionnaire was developed based on the work of Burgess, Hecht, and Lonigan (2002), Evans, Levy, and Jared (2001), Lysynchuk, et al. (2010), and Sénéchal et al. (1998). The questionnaire (Appendix E) had 76 items divided over three parts. The first requested basic demographic data and the frequency of basic literacy practices. Parents were asked to provide their annual income and the school their children attended. An example of a question regarding basic literacy practices is “How often do you or your partner do the following when reading to your child: direct your child’s attention to the printed text.” Parents were asked to rate the frequency on a 6 point Likert scale ranging from (1) never to (6) almost every day. The second portion of the home literacy questionnaire inquired about the frequency of home literacy practices in English, and the third was focused on the frequency of home literacy practices in French. These portions of the questionnaire asked about the same activities conducted in each language. Parents were presented with a list of activities, such as learning about word parts, and asked to rate the frequency on the same Likert scale presented in the first portion of the questionnaire.

There are concerns in the literature that self-report data is questionable given that social desirability may lead parents to exaggerate their home literacy practices (Bus et al., 1995); however, questionnaire responses were consistent with those reported in the interview portion of the study, which implies that the responses are likely a real reflection of what is occurring in the

home environment. Furthermore, the questionnaire was completed at least one month prior to interview participation.

Data Analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is an approach to qualitative data analysis that is committed to exploring how individuals make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is closely related to the interpretative tradition because it acknowledges the role of the researcher in making sense of the experience of the participants. Although the researcher attempts to gain an insider's perspective of the participant's experience, analysis of the participant's experience is influenced by the researcher's own unique biographical point of view (Smith, 1996). Larkin, Watts, and Clifton (2006) describe the phenomenological tenant of IPA as a commitment to understanding the key concerns of participants and the interpretative tenet as weaving them together from a psychological standpoint. To allow emergence of the key concerns of participants, IPA requires techniques that allow for identification of unforeseen themes that may appear in analysis, such as broad research questions (Smith, 2004). Smith (2004) also describes IPA as idiographic in the sense that each case is examined closely until a gestalt of the case is apparent, and then analysis moves onto a close examination of the next case. After all cases have been examined as such, a cross case analysis of emergent themes in regard to convergence and divergence is undertaken.

The qualitative interviews were analyzed according to the IPA processes proposed by Smith et al. (2009). First, audio recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. After transcribing, each interview was read twice with the goal of becoming immersed in the data and arriving at a gestalt conceptualization of each. The next step was an exploratory reading of the

transcript in which notes and comments on the interview were recorded. The aim of this phase is to develop a core of descriptive comments, which is likely to reflect the key concerns of the participant and the meaning they ascribe to the items being discussed, whether they are regarding relationships, processes, events, or other things. The third stage of analysis focuses on developing emergent themes. In this stage of analysis, the notes were examined for phrases that capture the essence of what is crucial for participants while holding in mind the entirety of the interview. In the fourth stage of analysis, a mapping of the themes occurs that reflects the way the themes cluster together, resulting in super-ordinate themes and sub themes. The next phase is to move to the next transcript and repeat the process. When all cases have been analyzed in this way, the data can be examined for patterns across cases including convergence and divergence of themes between participants or groups. Smith et al. (2009) suggest that by looking at recurring themes in this way, the validity of the findings is enhanced.

Results

Five themes emerged from the interview analysis and are presented below in turn. These themes and subthemes are shown in Table 1 and supporting quotes are provided in Appendix G. The first theme presented is Reasons for Enrolling (or not enrolling). Subthemes included enrollment for opportunity, the possibility of falling behind in academics, the reputation of the school, characteristics of the child, cultural importance, and cognitive advantages. The second theme was Confidence and Self-efficacy with the subthemes of parents feeling as though they cannot help with homework and utilization of resources to support learning. The third theme that emerged was reading together. The fourth theme was French as Homework in French Immersion with two subthemes: Parents who are comfortable speaking French and Parents who are not comfortable speaking French. The final theme, the Importance of Communication and Support, is concerned with the parent-school relationship. Direct quotes are provided to support each theme and data collected from the home literacy questionnaire are presented in tandem to triangulate the qualitative findings.

Table 1

Themes, Subthemes, and Frequency of Parental Report

Theme	Subtheme	French Immersion		English Program	
		N	%	N	%
Reasons for Enrolling (or not enrolling)	Opportunity	24	75	6	35
	Falling Behind	17	53	11	65
	School Reputation	13	41	6	35
	Child Characteristics	9	28	5	29
	Cultural Importance	11	32	1	6
Confidence and Self-efficacy	Cognitive Advantages	9	28	1	6
	Parents feel they are unable to help with homework	20	63	11	65
	Utilization of resources to support learning	10	31	3	18
Reading Together		32	100	17	100
French is Homework in French Immersion	Parents who are comfortable using French (use of French outside of homework context)	9	60		
	Parents who are not comfortable using French (use of French primarily in homework context)	10	59		
Importance of Communication and Support		14	44	8	47

Reasons for enrolling (or not enrolling)

Opportunity. Across age groups, the parents of children enrolled in French immersion endorsed occupational, academic, or travel opportunities as the main reasons they enrolled their child in a French immersion program. Seventy-five percent of parents with children in junior kindergarten French immersion, sixty-nine percent of parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion, and all of the parents with children in Grade 2 French immersion endorsed opportunity as a consideration in the enrollment decision. These parents considered French immersion an opportunity to increase chances of their children's success. For example, Robin, the mother of one child in junior kindergarten explained one of the factors she considered when she enrolled her daughter:

This is a global world and we want our children to have any options that they want to.

We don't want them to be limited by the language. And when you consider that French and English are two of the predominant languages... we figured we're setting them up pretty good there.

Thirty-six percent of parents who had children in English junior kindergarten, and forty percent of parents who had children enrolled in English Grade 2 also reported that they took into consideration the occupational advantages which bilingualism might provide their children. They identified not having the opportunity to become bilingual as one of the possible drawbacks of enrolling in the English program. Eva, the mother of three children, describes her thoughts about the occupational benefits of bilingualism, "Hopefully they won't be denied a job when they're 25 and looking for work because they are not bilingual, but that's really my only concern... especially living in a place like Sudbury where it is really Francophone."

Many parents who had chosen to enroll their children in the English program expressed their view of bilingualism as beneficial. The majority of these parents discussed how they would encourage their children to learn a second language if their children were interested in the future. Some parents also talked about how family members learned a language in their adulthood.

Falling behind. When parents who chose to enroll their children in the English program were asked why they chose the program, they discussed concerns that their children would not be as articulate, and that their children were unlikely to achieve bilingual status at the end of the program. Overall, 56% of parents with children in junior kindergarten, 57% of parents with children in senior kindergarten, and 63% of parents who had children in Grade 2, expressed that when they made their enrollment decision they were concerned about the possibility of their children falling behind in their academics because they were learning a second language. Parents wondered what the outcome of ‘the gamble’ of enrolling their child in French immersion would be. Struggling in the French immersion program may affect their children in a negative way because they would be moved back into an English program where they would be behind in English learning. Emma, who enrolled her children in a French immersion program explains:

My only concern with the French immersion is that I want to make sure that they are both doing well so we don’t have to pull them out and put them into the English program... If it’s not appropriate for them then we are going to put them at risk for being behind.

School reputation. Parents with children in both English and French immersion programs indicated that the reputation of the school was taken into consideration for enrollment decisions. A total of 44% of parents with children in junior kindergarten, 38% of parents with

children in senior kindergarten, and 25% of parents with children in Grade 2 indicated that one of the reasons they chose the school that they enrolled their child in was because other parents, friends, or family had provided positive reviews. Some parents also utilized tools to judge the quality of the school such as published EQAO test scores. Jessica, whose daughter was enrolled in her junior kindergarten year of an English program describes how, being new to the area, she sought out information about schools, “I had heard nothing but amazing things about [the school]... I started to... inquire from play groups and different things. I was talking to the kids, too.”

Child characteristics. Fourteen parents took their child’s characteristics into consideration when deciding to enroll their children in either a French immersion or an English program. These included 19% of parents who had children in junior kindergarten, 43% of parents who had children in senior kindergarten, and 38% of parents who had children in Grade 2. Parents often talked about how being immersed in a foreign language may frustrate their young children. Other parents talked about how children who are enrolled in French immersion need to be able to follow directions well. For example, Natalie, whose son is in his Grade 2 year of an English program, describes how she considered her son’s frustration tolerance in making the enrollment decision, “You know, like, even as a little toddler... like he gets frustrated when he doesn’t get it. When he can’t figure something out, he shuts down... So we were [contemplating it]. Yeah, if he gets frustrated, that’s it.”

Cultural importance. Another reason parents chose to enroll their children in a French immersion program included the value of learning a second language. Nineteen percent of parents who had children enrolled in junior kindergarten French immersion, forty-six percent of

parents who had children enrolled in senior kindergarten French immersion, and sixty-seven percent of parents who had children enrolled in Grade 2 French immersion endorsed cultural considerations in the enrollment decision. These parents felt that learning a second language was important culturally, and many discussed the importance of knowing French in their community, which has a large Francophone population. Chloe, who has two children enrolled in the French immersion program, says,

English and French have a lot in common. You know, a lot of similar words and yet still I find there are differences in concepts in English and French and definitely, you know, some unique cultural differences... It just widens your world.

Cognitive advantages. Thirty-one percent of parents with children in their junior kindergarten French immersion, twenty-three percent of parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion, and thirty-three percent of parents with a child enrolled in Grade 2 French immersion identified cognitive advantages of bilingualism as an enrollment consideration. During her interview, Emma, who enrolled both her son and daughter in French immersion, spoke about the cognitive advantages, “I think it’s good for development for their brain... I know there’s research about second language development just in terms of general overall brain development and it being beneficial, so I was interested in that.”

Confidence and Self-Efficacy

Although this was not the main focus of the study, a theme of self-efficacy emerged for the majority of parents who were not comfortable speaking French. These parents described

feeling unable to help their children with homework, feeling inadequate in reading French, and utilizing resources to support their children in their academics.

Parents feel they are unable to help with homework. Among the English program parents, concerns were presented when they discussed their decision to enroll their child in the English program. All of these parents were concerned about their ability to help their child navigate through aspects of the French immersion program, recognizing their own limitations with the French language. This consideration was also echoed by the English program families with children in junior and senior kindergarten. For example, Lucy, the mother of three children in the English program, explained their family's reason for enrollment:

I think that was the only reason why we went with English. Neither one of us spoke French and I was worried about what it would be like for the girls coming home and if I couldn't help them with their stuff, then...

Two parents with children in English Grade 2 also spoke about how they considered that enrolling their child in another language may put additional expectations on their sons. Ella, the custodial grandmother of a child in the English program explained, "And we don't speak French at home or anything. I think it just adds to their responsibilities. And unless they have a propensity for language and they can pick it up very easily, I think it's very difficult."

Among French immersion parents, self-efficacy in being able to support their child in their French language homework also emerged as a theme. Fifty six percent of parents with children in junior kindergarten French immersion, sixty-nine percent of parents who had children in senior kindergarten French immersion, and sixty-seven percent of parents who had children in

Grade 2 French immersion expressed feeling unable to help their children with their homework. Anna, a parent with a child in Grade 2 described her struggle in supporting her children in homework:

We thought it would be easier because my husband's French and I'm not French but I understand it... So I find it's getting tougher now, the older she gets. Like, I'm struggling with helping her. Now my husband has to help her with her homework.

Another Grade 2 parent echoed this sentiment. Although Molly feels comfortable speaking French because she attended a French immersion school as a child, she explains how it may have been more challenging if she had less experience with French:

It's been good because I have a background in French immersion. I went to French immersion as a child so that allowed me to help him because my husband doesn't speak French... I mean there's been some really kind of tough questions that if I don't speak French I'm not really sure how I could have helped him.

The main concern English program parents expressed was that, had they chosen to enroll their child in French immersion, they would be largely unable to help their children with their homework. Sixty-four percent of parents with children enrolled in junior kindergarten English and eighty percent of parents with children enrolled in Grade 2 English identified their concern that their limited ability to speak French would have had negative consequences for their children if they had enrolled in French immersion. For these parents, choosing French immersion meant their children would be required to negotiate homework alone. These concerns were

echoed across grades. Eva, whose son was enrolled in the English program, explained how it was important to her and her husband to be involved in their child's academics:

One big issue is that neither my husband or I are French speaking and I know that French immersion programs tell you that you don't have to be in order for your children to still be really successful, but I guess... My husband and I both have post-secondary education and quite a bit of it actually. And I think we just felt that it was really important to be able to really participate in their homework...

For this parent, the opportunity to be able to support homework outweighed the benefits of second language learning. Parents with children enrolled in the French immersion program (10 junior kindergarten, 4 senior kindergarten, 2 Grade 2) also expressed concern that their children might be 'on their own' with their homework when the requirements surpassed their abilities, but these parents tended to identify resources their children could utilize, such as tutors, to help them succeed.

Some parents who were not comfortable speaking French also discussed how, even when they do try to help their children with reading or homework, their children recognize their limitations and, sometimes, make fun of their efforts. One parent who does not feel comfortable speaking French with a daughter in junior kindergarten French immersion talked about his experience in attempting to read to his child in French: "I did start to read her stuff [in French] earlier on, and then she started correcting me. And so I lost interest in that pretty quick. (laughs) Having my daughter correct me on stuff."

Ella, whose daughter was enrolled in Grade 2 French immersion, also talked about the challenges of reading French to her child. She describes listening to her daughter read French but reports she does not read to her daughter in French because she is self-conscious of her ability. Although she did attempt it previously, French reading has stopped. She says, “You know, like, I try with my two year old because he doesn’t really understand and he can’t make fun of me, right? (laughs)”

Olivia, the mother of a senior kindergarten child in French immersion describes her experience and the reasons she no longer attempts to read to her child in French. She makes the connection between her feeling of competence, self-consciousness, and attempts at reading French to her child:

I’ll try sometimes to read [French books] to them, just the simple ones. The ones with the pictures and stuff. [My daughter] will laugh at me now and say, ‘No, Mom. That’s not how it’s said.’ But it’s my own self-consciousness, too. I’m like, ‘Oh, I can’t say that.’

Utilization of resources to support learning. Parents in French immersion indicate that, to support their children in learning, they must often rely on other resources early in their child’s academic career such as websites, books, or their older children in the French immersion program. Thirteen percent of parents with children in junior kindergarten French immersion, forty-six percent of parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion, and sixty-seven percent of parents with children in Grade 2 French immersion discussed resources they utilize to support their children in homework. Evan, a parent whose son was enrolled in Grade 2

French immersion, discusses the reality of homework in his household. While Evan has some French background, he is beginning to reach the threshold of his capability when he helps his children with homework:

I know there are a lot of resources available for parents. But I think it's really difficult to have a child in the French immersion program when neither parent speaks a word of French... I think a lot of times they struggle with bringing homework home that they're trying to do but they don't really remember and don't really know how to do it. And, you know, there is a lot of homework that comes home that's just incomplete.

Parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion who are not comfortable speaking French also indicated that, quite often, they need to rely on their other older children or others in their environment in order to support homework completion. For example, Emily, a mother who does not speak French described her experience with her two children in French immersion:

Sometimes I have to get her to explain it to me if I don't understand. I mean a lot of them are pretty simple. It's a picture and there's the word underneath. Those ones are pretty straight forward, but sometimes there are little phrases or little words that I don't even know. So we'll make it into a big discussion where she'll tell me and then if she doesn't know, we have to get her older brother or sister to come and help us out with it, too.

Parents who do not speak French with children in French immersion also discussed the amount of effort they put forth to assist with homework, whether it be looking in French-English dictionaries, contacting the teacher, or searching the internet. Parents search for the meaning of

words, their proper pronunciation, and also translation of text to help them move from one language to another. Evan, a Grade 2 parent with two children in French immersion talked at length about the amount of effort parents were required to put forth to help with homework:

We took a lot more aggressive work in a lot of the homework he was doing. We were communicating with the teacher directly and said, ‘Ok, show me how to do that so I can show him how to do it.’ Things like that.

Reading Together

All families who were interviewed across programs reported the importance of reading in their family, and more specifically reading as quality time together. They described it as a fun and relaxing activity, wanting to pass on a love of reading to their children. And for many, it is an evening routine that has been established to encourage winding down before bed. For example, Natalie, a mother whose son is enrolled in French immersion said: “We’ve always done that. Climb into bed, grab a book. It’s something. It’s alone time.” Anna, a parent whose daughter is enrolled in the French immersion program also describes their reading experience as a special quiet time for her and her child: “It’s the only time we’re alone when it’s peaceful, you know?”

This practice of reading together seems to continue as children grow. Reading together also emerged as a theme across programs in junior kindergarten interviews. For example, Eva, a parent whose son was in junior kindergarten said: “We read every night before they go to bed, with the odd exception of course. But that’s a really important part of the day for me, is to be able to spend some time with them one on one.” Aaron, another parent with a child in junior

kindergarten talks about the permanence of the night time reading routine: “He’s had his bath and he’s got his pajamas and we read a few stories and then he goes to sleep. Every night. Since he was probably nine months old.” Reading together also emerged as a theme in the senior kindergarten interviews. Across programs, parents described reading as part of the bedtime routine. Emily, a parent with a child in French immersion senior kindergarten also describes night time reading:

Sometimes we’ll read in the living room, on the couch once everybody’s settled and kind of getting into that down time. Or if it’s a little later and it’s bedtime then we’ll [read] in her room. She’ll be all tucked in under the covers and we’ll read.

All of the parents of children in Grade 2 discussed the changing nature of reading together. Whereas once it was parents who read the majority of the stories now the children are beginning to read on their own. However, even in families where parents are not reading as often to their children anymore, they enjoy listening to their children read. Clara, a parent with a child in the English program describes how things have changed at bed time:

And sometimes he asks me to read to him and I do but – No, unfortunately it doesn’t happen that often because he reads himself. Sometimes he wants to read to me. And I like that. Because he goes to bed – before I used to read him a story but now often he will read to me instead.

Results from the home literacy questionnaire also support the theme of reading together. In Grade 2, parents regardless of program, report that they read with their children. The home literacy questionnaire reveals that, across program, 66.6% of surveyed parents reported reading

to their children in English more than once per week. Parents with children in Grade 2 English ($Mdn = 2.0$) did not significantly differ from parents with children in Grade 2 French immersion ($Mdn = 2.0$) on time spent together reading in English, ($U = 34.50$, $z = -.589$, ns , $r = -.13$). Similarly, all Grade 2 parents reported that their children read out loud in English, with 94% engaging in this activity at least once per week. There were no significant differences between parents with children in Grade 2 French immersion ($Mdn = 5.0$) and parents with children in Grade 2 English ($Mdn = 5.0$) in the amount of time their children spend reading English out loud, ($U = 36.0$, $z = -.417$, ns , $r = -.09$).

In addition, the home literacy questionnaire indicated that 83% of parents across programs read English with their children in the bedroom most likely indicating that this activity occurs in proximity to bed time. Among French immersion parents, there were no statistical differences in parental rated enjoyment of English shared reading ($Mdn = 5.0$) as compared with French shared reading ($Mdn = 5.0$, $z = -1.73$, ns , $r = -.58$), or time spent together reading English ($Mdn = 2.0$) as compared with French ($Mdn = 1.0$, $z = -1.34$, ns , $r = -.45$). Parents reported that they read significantly more English ($Mdn = 4.0$) than French ($Mdn = 2.0$) to their children, ($z = -2.57$, $p = .01$, $r = -.86$), but there were no significant differences in how often children read English ($Mdn = 5.0$) or French ($Mdn = 5.0$) aloud, ($z = -.32$, ns , $r = -.11$).

French is Homework in French Immersion

Among parents of children in French immersion who reported during their interview that they do not feel comfortable speaking French, there seems to be a pattern of reading English more for recreation, while parents describe French reading time as more related to homework and learning. Across programs, homework is done at the kitchen table in a more serious way

while reading in the evening is associated with the living room or bedroom and fun. Among families of children in French immersion, homework includes reading in French while reading in English is an activity often enjoyed in the evening. Interview data also suggests more informal teaching that occurs with English reading while more formal teaching is associated with French during homework time, when the parent's level of French allows.

French immersion parents who are comfortable using French. Among parents of children in French immersion who reported during the interview that they are comfortable using French, literacy patterns tend to be different than among parents who reported that they are not comfortable using French. If these parents read French with their children, they usually did so without a distinction between French and English reading, and French appears to be more integrated into their everyday activities. For example, Michelle, a mother who is fully bilingual explains, "We'll have French supper nights...or French [car] ride, a French drive or whatever..." She goes on to describe how hockey encourages French practice, "My oldest is a Montreal Canadians fan and so every Saturday night there's usually... an English Toronto game going on and then a French Montreal game going." Parents who speak French also generally report that there are no differences when they read French or English with their children. However, the extent that their children embrace French outside of school work appears to also be influenced by the personalities of their children. For example, Beth, the mother of two children in French immersion describes the difference between English and French reading in their family:

It's totally different. In English it's kind of – like it's relaxing. The way you wind down for the evening. It's kind of that loving time. And French is always about work and homework. And frustration. [My younger son] doesn't understand a lot of the words and

he gets frustrated quickly. [My older son] understands it but it's French to him; it's homework to him.

Beth goes on to explain how she has seen the frustration with French change over time in her older son. She discusses the level of comfort that her children have with French as a contributing factor to their French activities:

I'll read it in French until he gets frustrated and he says, "What are you doing? Read my book so that I understand." And I'll translate it for him... And then he got too frustrated so I stopped... but I can see how [my older son] is changing. He's more confident in his French... he doesn't have a problem with it anymore like he used to. So I'm kind of hoping that as [my younger son] learns too, then he'll feel more confident and comfortable... but there's also a bit of a comfort factor there. Perfectly comfortable; English is home.

French immersion parents who are not comfortable using French. Among parents who reported during the interview that they are not comfortable using French and have children in French immersion, interview data indicates that French reading occurs primarily in the context of homework. Parents spoke about the challenges of finding French reading material at the appropriate level, and those who had little experience with French spoke about how their own language limitations made reading in French with their children challenging. Seventy-one percent of parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion who reported that they did not speak French spoke about how French reading was reserved for homework, and their

children would choose to read English at home for recreation. Emma, a parent with two children in French immersion explains:

It seems like French is kind of school work and English is what they do for fun... I think the French is kind of more what he does at school and what he does for homework and English is kind of what I read to him.

Rosalie, another mother of a child in senior kindergarten French immersion, describes the difference in French and English at her home:

At night time we're relaxing. It's more of a relaxing thing. But when we're doing any sort of homework, then we're sitting at the table doing it. See, we don't do a lot of [teaching] focus on the English. It seems to be we're focusing a lot on the French because that is what her work is in.

Mia talks about the differences in reading English and French in their household:

I'll get him to read to me, his little [French] books that he brings home...while I am making supper in the kitchen. Usually I will read it as well so that he can hear how I would read it and have him follow along with me...When I read to him in French I will refer to [a page in his workbook]... it's little groupings of [letters] and what kind of sounds that makes and different things in the French language.

This kind of formal teaching, or focus on the printed text, seems to be common among parents with children in French immersion who reported that they are not comfortable using French. A sense of reading for fun and informal teaching, or focusing on the story more so than

the printed text, seems to be common among parents with children in French immersion who reported that they are not comfortable speaking French when they are reading English. However, this difference could be rooted in their capabilities with French and their sense of self-efficacy, which will be discussed later. Olivia, talks about how her limitations with French prevent her from reading in the same fun, lighthearted way as she would in English:

[When I'm reading in French] I'm just saying the pronunciation the best that I can... It's more like, "Okay, what does that mean?" That's as far as we get... we'd just read it to get it done with because I don't understand what I'm reading.

The results of the home literacy questionnaire indicate that, on the whole, parents of children in French Immersion programs report that their children engage in formal literacy activities in English less frequently than they would in French. For example, questionnaire results indicate 78% of parents with children in French immersion report teaching their children about word parts in French 2-3 times per month or less while 67% of these parents indicate that they teach their children about word parts in English once per month or less.

Wilcoxon signed rank tests indicate there were no significant differences between teaching children about word parts in English ($Mdn = 2.0$) and teaching about word parts in French ($Mdn = 3.0$), among French immersion families. Similarly, 67% of parents report their children spelling French words out loud and 56% of parents report their children spelling English words out loud 3-4 times per week or more. These differences in spelling English words out loud ($Mdn = 4.0$) and French words out loud ($Mdn = 4.0$) were not significant.

Additionally, 78% of parents report their children write individual words in French at home, and 56% of parents report their children write individual words in English at home, once per week or more. The frequency of word writing in English ($Mdn = 4.0$) and French ($Mdn = 5.0$) were not significantly different. Parents accessed the library for English books ($Mdn = 2.0$) significantly more often than for French books ($Mdn = 1.0$, $z = -2.0$, $p = .046$, $r = -.67$). Similarly, parents reported that their children accessed educational games in English ($Mdn = 2.0$) more often than French educational games ($Mdn = 1.0$, $z = -1.98$, $p = .047$, $r = .66$), watched English educational television ($Mdn = 5.0$) significantly more often than French educational television ($Mdn = 1.0$, $z = -2.54$, $p = .01$, $r = -.85$), and played English word games ($Mdn = 2.0$) significantly more often than French word games ($Mdn = 1.0$, $z = -2.23$, $p = .026$, $r = -.74$).

Importance of Communication and Support

The majority of parents, regardless of program, spoke about the relationship they had with the school in a positive way. Twenty-five percent of parents with children in junior kindergarten French immersion, twenty-seven percent of parents with children in junior kindergarten English, fifty –percent of parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion, one parent who had a child in senior kindergarten English, all of the parents who had children in Grade 2 French immersion, eighty percent of parents who had children in Grade 2 English reported good relationships with the teachers and/or school. Parents who had experienced working more closely with the teacher or school described their appreciation of teacher communication and support. They talked about the importance of identifying potential problems, such as being below expectations in reading early on, and knowing about how their child is doing in their academic work. Teachers are viewed as the bridge between school and

home and sometimes, when parents are having difficulty deciding which program in which to register, they looked to the school for support. For example, Kacy, who chose enrollment in French immersion but later moved her daughter into the English program, describes their enrollment experience:

I had a hard time deciding. I really did. Because there was a lot of mixed opinions of people I would talk to and, you know, we couldn't decide what we should do, whether it was French immersion or English. And then I had called the school and talked with the vice principal of the French immersion program and I guess she's the one that made me decide to try it out.

Parents also talked about the importance of teachers picking up on any difficulties that children are having in the curriculum, communicating them early on, and developing strategies together to help support the child. Zoe and Nathan, parents to a child in senior kindergarten French immersion, described why it is so important to them for teachers to be aware of early difficulties, "The sooner that these delays are recognized and treated, the more successful the child will be." Norah, a parent with a child in Grade 2 English, describes how the teacher helped her son by paying close attention to him. During the interview, she expressed an appreciation for their attention to his abilities and communication with home. She says:

They certainly, um, know him well as a learner. Any time there has been any need for any kind of extra support, it's been there for him. He was identified very early on for reading intervention... They knew that he just needed that little extra boost.

Summary

The results of this study indicate that, across programs and grades, parents engaged in parent-child shared reading. All parents described reading together at bedtime as a relaxing and enjoyable activity, used to facilitate closeness and “wind down” before bed. As children aged, parents from both programs described a shift in shared reading, and parents increasingly began listening to their children read. Parents reported that this activity was extremely enjoyable.

In the French immersion program, parents’ self-efficacy regarding French seemed to influence the frequency of their involvement with French literacy activities and homework. Furthermore, parents in French immersion generally reported engaging in more formal activities related to homework in French rather than informal activities. While parents with children in French immersion tended not read to their children as often in French, they did listen to their children read in both English and French and reported finding both equally enjoyable. The results suggest that reading French may often be in the context of homework while English reading is reserved for bedtime reading among French immersion families.

The interview data suggested there may be a difference in French reading amongst French immersion parents. Specifically, parents who are less comfortable using French may tend to reserve French activities for homework purposes. Furthermore, parents who are not as comfortable with French may not feel as effective in supporting homework. Finally, across program, parents tended to indicate that they feel supported by their school and that they appreciate teacher communication, especially when it is related to academic concerns.

This chapter examined the results of the current study regarding the experiences of parents with children in English and French immersion programs. Five themes emerged from the data. The first theme was Reasons for Enrolling (or not enrolling) with the subthemes of enrollment for opportunity, the possibility of falling behind in academics, the reputation of the school, characteristics of the child, cultural importance, and cognitive advantages. The second theme was Confidence and Self-efficacy with the subthemes of parents feeling as though they cannot help with homework and utilization of resources to support learning. The third theme that emerged was reading together and the fourth theme was French as Homework in French Immersion with two subthemes: Parents who are comfortable speaking French and Parents who are not comfortable speaking French. The final theme was the Importance of Communication and Support. The final chapter will discuss the results of this study in relation to the literature and examine the implications of the current study.

Discussion

The current study investigated the experiences of parents who have enrolled their children in an English program or a French immersion program from one school board in Sudbury, Ontario. Parents with children in Grade 2 were asked to complete interviews and questionnaires regarding their home literacy practices. In addition, interviews with parents with children in junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten were utilized to help triangulate data. The findings indicate that parents who decide to enroll their children in the English and French immersion program identify different considerations when making the enrollment decision.

The results of this study indicate that parents who choose to enroll their children in English consider different factors than those who decide to enroll their children in French immersion. Parents who chose to enroll their children in French immersion reported that the main reason for enrollment was to provide increased opportunity for their children. These parents viewed bilingualism as an advantage in travel, academics, and occupation. These results are in line with existing research. For example, in a study of Anglo and Latino parents who chose to enroll their children in a Spanish-English two way immersion program, English parents reported that they considered exposure to cultural diversity, early second language learning, and career opportunities when enrolling their children in two-way immersion (Craig, 1996). Similar results have been found in Spanish-English two way immersion programs (e.g. Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006; Parkes, 2008; Shannon & Milan, 2002).

The results of the current study regarding enrollment decisions are also consistent with another study examining reasons for enrollment among families with children in French

immersion. In 1986, Morrison, Pawley, Bonyun, and Unitt undertook a study for the Ontario Ministry of Education. They distributed a questionnaire to parents who had children in French immersion and asked them to rate the importance of seven factors in choosing to enroll their child in French immersion. These factors included: "My child will need French to get a good job", "The early grades are a good time to try out immersion", "Knowing French will give my child opportunities for wide social experiences", and "I felt my child would derive satisfaction from knowing a second language". While support existed for the other listed factors, ninety percent of parents surveyed indicated that French for occupational opportunity was somewhat or very important in their decision.

An important finding of the current study examining parent experience is that parents were confident about their ability to make the enrollment decision at an early age based on their knowledge about learning French regardless of their enrollment decision. This confidence, in turn, may play a role in encouraging their involvement in their child's academics. Hoover-Dempsey's and Sandler's (1995, 1997; Walker et al., 2005) model of parent involvement suggest that a parent's involvement is influenced by their motivational beliefs. That is, parents need to feel that it is their role to help their children with their work and the ability to successfully help their children with their homework. Parents who choose to enroll their children in the English program recognize the limitations of their competence in French and therefore choose to enroll their children in the program where they are confident they will be most effective. Similarly, parents who decide to enroll their children in French immersion are confident that learning a second language will be beneficial for their child's future. Furthermore, all parents talked at length about the consequences of their decision for their child, both positive and negative. This

consideration of the likely outcomes of their actions demonstrates what Hoover-Dempsey et al., (2005) would consider a high level of efficacy in regard to which program would be the best option for their child.

Although the findings of this study suggest that parents who are enrolling their children demonstrate self-efficacy in regard to their decision, these decisions can be made based on an incomplete understanding of the evidence. For example, some parents discussed enrolling their children in French immersion because children can learn languages more easily in their youth. The idea that children can learn a second language more easily than adults is still debated in the literature (Vanhove, 2013). Therefore, parents may hold beliefs about second language learning that are not congruent with recent literature and may be supported in their enrollment decisions by providing more easily accessible information regarding research findings and statistics related to French immersion education.

While 43% of parents with children in senior kindergarten French immersion and 67% of parents with children in Grade 2 French immersion discussed the amount of work and resources required to assist their children with homework, only 13% of parents with children in junior kindergarten discussed this issue. This temporal discrepancy suggests that, as children progress through the French immersion program, parents may encounter increased demands on their capability and time. In junior kindergarten children are learning basic skills, which parents may feel comfortable addressing with the knowledge they already possess.

Interestingly, although parents of children in French immersion programs described challenges in reading French with their children at home, 56% of parents reported extremely

enjoying this activity. It is possible that when parents responded to this question, they considered both reading to their children in French and listening to their children read out loud in French because a substantially large proportion (89%) of French immersion parents report reading to their child in French once per month or less. French immersion parents report reading with their children in English (78%) at least once per week; however, parents indicated they enjoyed reading together in English to the same degree as French. It could be that parents do not have the opportunity to read to their children in French or that access to appropriate French materials is lacking in the home. The interview data suggests that there may be other factors underlying French reading frequency among French immersion parents.

The parent involvement model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997, 2005) indicates that parental motivational beliefs, including parental role construction and self-efficacy are an important part of involvement decisions for parents. The interview data provided in this study suggest that as their children move from junior kindergarten to Grade 2, parents face increasing demands on their existing skill set when faced with involvement decisions. Coupled with child correction and realizing that their language abilities limit participation in the academic work their children bring home, it may be that parents choose to become involved in other ways. Alternatively, parents may choose to increase their language abilities in tandem with their children so that they can participate.

Another finding of this study is that in Grade 2, regardless of program, parents reported that they read with their children. Across programs, the majority of parents (66.6%) reported reading to their children in English more than once per week on the home literacy questionnaire. Furthermore, 94% of Grade 2 parents indicated their children read out loud in English at least

once per week despite not being part of the French immersion academic curriculum until Grade 3. These results are similar to those of LeFevre and Sénéchal (2003), who demonstrated that parents of children in Early French Immersion engage in English literacy activities more frequently than French literacy activities, and reported reading to their children in English almost every day. LeFevre and Sénéchal (2003) also found that, over time, the frequency of both formal and informal activities in French increased with the exception of reading together in French which largely remains steady over time.

In the current study, parents of children in French immersion were still engaging in English literacy activities more frequently than French literacy activities at home in Grade 2. However, the home literacy questionnaire data did not identify the degree of comfort parents had using French. It may be that parents who are not comfortable using French are engaging in French literacy activities less as a group compared to families with parents who are comfortable using French. Although French immersion was designed for parents who do not speak French and no parental ability in French is required to enroll in the program, it may be useful to further examine parents who are comfortable reading in French and those who are not in to determine whether support needs are different between groups.

Taken together, these data suggest that parents who reported that they are not comfortable using French show a different pattern of literacy activities than parents who reported that they are comfortable using French. Parents who are comfortable using French tend report no differences in reading French and English at home. In contrast, parents who are not as comfortable using French are more likely to engage in formal literacy activities with their children in French for homework while informal activities are more likely to be in English. This difference is likely

related to the homework these children are bringing home that is in French and would require more formal teaching to complete. Interestingly, parents of children in French immersion reported on the home literacy questionnaire that their children enjoy reading English and French equally, which suggests that these differences may be related to parent ability and not child-directed (i.e., child enjoyment of French activities). Furthermore, appropriate French materials may be less accessible to families and would limit the kinds of French interactions occurring at home. More research is required before conclusions can be drawn regarding the roots of differential English and French informal and formal activities in the home.

Finally, the majority of parents, regardless of program, spoke about the relationship they had with the teacher or school in a positive way. The parent involvement model (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; 1997) holds that another influential factor in parents becoming engaged in their children's academic work is their perception of invitations for involvement from others. Particularly important may be invitations from school personnel because these invitations communicate to parents that their involvement is welcome, valuable, and expected (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Invitations may come from the school itself, teachers, or their child. During the interview, all parents, across both grades and programs, reported that teacher-parent communication was very important to them. These findings are in line with previous research (e.g. Corno, 2000; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler & Burrow, 1995), which showed that parents value parent-teacher communication; especially in regard to the methods through which they can support their child's learning.

In total, 45% of interviewed parents discussed the importance of teacher-parent communication and support. These parents wanted to know how their children were doing and

what they could do to support them in their academic career. These results suggest that teachers need to be especially sensitive to opening lines of communication with parents of children in French immersion. Parents who were not comfortable using French tended to express feeling less confident in their ability to effectively support their child in school. One parent in the study who was not comfortable speaking French expressed frustration at being unable to judge her son's progress in French immersion on her own, as she would be able to in the English program. She described this ambiguity as a "black box." She says, "If you ask me today, should my children stay in French immersion, I would say to you, 'Yes, because the teacher hasn't told me... to take them out.'" Feedback for parents regarding their child's academic status and specific tasks they can do to successfully increase their children's achievement may be helpful in fostering parent confidence and involvement.

Strengths of the Current Study

The strengths of the current study include utilization of multiple data sources to investigate the experiences of parents who had children in the early grades. Parents of children in both the English program and French immersion program were invited to participate. Furthermore, the parents who participated had children ranging in year of academic program from junior kindergarten to Grade 2. These parents had children in multiple schools which also provides for a broader investigation of experience. This study also employed both interviews and questionnaire data which allows for checking of congruence between data reported on both measures.

Trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to the validity and reliability of the research in much the same way as quantitative studies (Creswell, 2013). Many different strategies for

validation have been proposed including triangulation, peer review, clarifying researcher bias, and member checking. The methods utilized for trustworthiness in the current study are discussed below.

Merriam (2009) presents credibility as addressing how closely the research findings match reality. Credibility is how representative the data are of what is really occurring. Shenton (2004) describes ways of achieving credibility in qualitative research, including triangulation. Triangulation is a method of utilizing two or three measurements to converge at a common point, or finding corroborating evidence (Creswell, 2013). It might be noted that Merriam (2009) describes the move away from triangulation from an interpretive-constructivist perspective to a process called crystallization formed from a post-positivist view. She describes the difference between the two in that triangulation assumes that a phenomenon is fixed and can be triangulated, whereas crystallization recognizes that how a phenomenon is perceived depends on the point of reference of the observer. Triangulation is one of the strategies utilized to ensure validity and reliability in this study because it is consistent with the interpretive-constructivist perspective from which this study is conducted.

In this study, the use of both questionnaire data and interview data is a method of triangulation because two data sets are being utilized to support each other. Another method of triangulation is checking information participants provide against information other participants provide, similar to what Smith et al. (2009) suggest in data analysis. In this study, the themes were identified across cases, which also contributed to the credibility of the study. Furthermore, participants were families with children attending various schools which also lends credibility

through site triangulation. In other words, the credibility of the findings of the current study is supported because data was gathered from different places and cross-checked.

This study also utilized peer review of the research process, findings, and interpretations. A committee member served as an auditor and reviewed emerging themes with the goal of ensuring the narrative was a credible account. Records of these meetings and emerging themes were also kept to serve as an audit trail. Member checking was also utilized to increase the validity of the study. Participant feedback was requested relating to the narrative and specific themes that emerged from data analysis (Merriam, 2009). Although participants were invited to provide feedback regarding the emergent themes, at the time this document was written, none of the participants had elected to do so. In these ways, external checks of the research process were undertaken which is a method of increasing the validity of the study (Creswell, 2013).

Clarifying researcher bias is another method of increasing validity. Reflexivity is offered, providing readers the details of the researcher's perspective, biases, and assumptions that may influence interpretations (Creswell, 2013). Providing these details allows readers to see how the researcher may have interpreted the data (Merriam, 2009).

Limitations of the Current Study

This study had multiple data sources (i.e. questionnaire data and interviews with parents); however, all of these data sources were parental self-report. Some researchers are hesitant to accept self-report data, suggesting that it may be biased towards more socially desirable answers; however, in the interviews parents did not appear hesitant to disclose that they did not engage in

activities that may appear more desirable. For example, many parents who had children in French immersion disclosed that they simply did not read to their children in French.

Although this study included interview data across three years (junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, and Grade 2), parents of children in Grade 2 may have also been interviewed in senior kindergarten. This is a limitation because it was possible that one or more parents were interviewed twice and because of the way data were coded to ensure participant confidentiality, it is not clear if this was the case. Furthermore, enrollment decisions were discussed in retrospect and the views of the participants' may have changed with time.

Another limitation of the current study involves questionnaire data collection. In this study, there was a trend of differences between parents who were comfortable using French and those who were not comfortable using French. Although this trend was not a focus of the study or an anticipated finding, it emerged from the interview data and opens a line of inquiry that is interesting for future research. Still, the level of comfort with French was not addressed on the questionnaire form and, therefore, limits data triangulation on this issue.

Finally, although data were collected from parents with children enrolled from junior kindergarten to Grade 2 from various schools, the sample was collected from a limited geographic area. As discussed below, results may differ based on geographic location and access to French immersion programs. Therefore, future research is recommended with a sample drawn from a different geographic location.

Implications for Future Research

All data gathered for this study were parental self-report. It may be beneficial for future studies to elicit alternative perspectives (e.g., other family members) in order to glean a more complete picture. In addition, the interviews discussed enrollment decisions in retrospect. Future research may consider following parents as they move through the process of the enrollment decision. The current study did not pursue families as they progressed through the program, and this longitudinal perspective may give us a more comprehensive understanding of 1) where information utilized to make the decision comes from; 2) who is influential in making the decision; and 3) how families arrive at a final decision. Furthermore, the considerations for enrollment may differ based on the French immersion program offered and, therefore, investigation into enrollment decisions in middle and late immersion programs is also warranted. This information will allow policy makers the opportunity to present parents with timely, relevant, and accurate information on which to base their decision.

The differences in reading between parents who are not comfortable using French and parents who are comfortable using French may indicate an important area for future research. Although the current study was limited in sample size, interview and questionnaire data indicate there may be differences in the way that parents engage in informal and formal activities. Specifically, parents who are not comfortable using French tended to reported engaging in formal activities in French more often than informal activities. On the whole, parents who have children in French immersion indicated engaging in formal activities in French more often than in English; however, the questionnaire data did not allow for analysis based on parental level of comfort using French. Furthermore, parents who are not comfortable using French and have

children in French immersion expressed doubt in their ability to successfully help their children with their homework and self-consciousness when reading to or with their children during the interview. In contrast, parents who were comfortable using French did not report feeling worried that they would not be able to help their children with their homework. These findings may have implications for how these children progress through the French immersion program and may be important for future research to explore.

In light of the current findings, future research may consider a more in-depth examination of groups based on their level of comfort with French and the differences that emerge between them. Furthermore, two parents in the sample of the current study indicated that the language spoken at home was one other than English. An increasing number of newly immigrated families who speak a language other than French or English are choosing to enroll their children in French immersion (Swain & Lapkin, 2005) and therefore may merit further investigation.

Makropoulos (2010) suggests that the engagement (or disengagement) of students in French immersion is influenced by their linguistic and academic situations. Makropoulos (2010) found that students enrolled in secondary French immersion who did not have a bilingual parent found the classes, taught in their second or third language, difficult. In contrast, students who had a parent eligible for French minority status were comfortable with the program and found it relatively easy. These students gained experience with French in family contexts while the children of parents who did not speak French could not. By further investigating the early differences in language usage between groups, we may be able to better understand differences between engaged and disengaged students in later grades.

Implications for Practice

One implication for practice emerging from this study is tailoring information provided to parents who are facing enrollment decisions. Easy access to straightforward information regarding the benefits of enrollment may be helpful to some parents. Although information is already available on the Rainbow District School Board website and at schools themselves, considering additional ways of providing this information to parents whose children are pre-school age may be beneficial. The factors that parents commonly consider when facing enrollment might be addressed in the literature provided for them as well. Given that the majority of parents considered their ability to help with homework if their children were enrolled in French immersion, findings suggest that it would be beneficial to provide parents information on the types of supports available to them while their children are navigating the French immersion program. Many parents also worried that their children would be behind in academic subjects or lose the ability to communicate in English. These results can be used to assist in tailoring the information and resources provided to parents.

For French immersion parents, this study highlights the importance of building their self-efficacy in terms of homework support. Providing information on cross language transfer might help reassure parents that they are supporting their children's education through the literacy activities they engage in at home. Two parents in this study suggested that offering a group homework time could be beneficial if parents had the option of attending. Another strategy might be hosting an internet forum or telephone line that parents can access for language-specific homework support (e.g. translating a question from French to English). These resources would give parents an opportunity to access information quickly and easily. Providing homework

instructions in both English and French for the primary grades may also be helpful to families. Finally, giving families the option of becoming involved in French-language activities (e.g., French movie nights) within the school may assist in building parental involvement and self-efficacy.

Perceived communication and support from the school is important to families, regardless of program. The internet might be a useful tool for school personnel to bridge home and academic environments. For example, classroom teachers might utilize email instead of the traditional agendas to facilitate quick communication and feedback regarding their child's academic status and specific tasks they can do to support their child's learning. Websites may be utilized to provide administrative information such as homework instructions, calendars of events, and notices. These methods of communication may help parents feel more connected to the school and classroom, which parents in this study felt was important.

Conclusion

This study examined the experiences of parents who have enrolled their children in the English program or the French immersion program. Parents with children in Grade 2 were asked to complete interviews and questionnaires regarding their home literacy practices. Interviews with parents that had children in junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten were also utilized to support the findings. The results indicate that parents who decide to enroll their children in an English or French immersion program have different considerations when making the enrollment decision. Differences also emerged between parents with children in French immersion based on their level of comfort using French in terms of self-efficacy in homework and the literacy activities they engage in with their children. These data contribute to the field of French

immersion and early literacy studies by identifying different patterns of early literacy among parents of young children in French immersion. The results from the current study can be utilized to improve current methods of French immersion advertising. The results indicate that parents require more ease of access to information regarding enrollment.

References

- Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.
- Allington, R. L. (1984). Content, coverage, and contextual reading in reading groups. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 16, 85-96.
- Anglin, J. M. (1993). Vocabulary development: A morphological analysis. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 58(10), Serial No. 238.
- Anguiano, R. P. V. (2004). Families and schools: The effect of parental involvement on high school completion. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(1), 61-85.
- August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2006). *Developing literacy in second language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on language-minority children and youth*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Baker, C. (2007). *A parents' and teachers' guide to bilingualism* (3d ed). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (5th ed.). Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters.
- Barik, H. C., & Swain, M. (1975). Three-year evaluation of a large scale early grade French immersion program: the Ottawa study. *Language Learning*, 25, 1-30.
- Barnard, W. M. (2004). Parent involvement in elementary school and educational attainment. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 26, 39-62.

- Bennett, K. K., Weigel, D. J., & Martin, S. S. (2002). Children's acquisition of early literacy skills: Examining family contributions. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 17*, 295-317.
- Bialystok, E. (2011). Reshaping the mind: The benefits of bilingualism. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology, 65*(4), 229-235.
- Bialystok, E., Peets, K., & Moreno, S. (2012). Producing bilinguals through immersion education: Development of metalinguistic awareness. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, Available on CJO doi:10.1017/S0142716412000288.
- Biemiller, A., & Boote, C. (2006). An effective method for building meaning vocabulary in primary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 44-62.
- Biemiller, A., & Slonim, N. (2001). Estimating root word vocabulary growth in normative and advantaged populations: Evidence for a common sequence of vocabulary acquisition. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 93*(3), 498-520.
- Bingham, G. E. (2007). Maternal literacy beliefs and the quality of mother-child book-reading interactions: Associations with children's early literacy development. *Early Education and Development, 18*(1), 23-49.
- Blake, B. E., & Blake, R. W. (2002). *Literacy and learning: A reference book*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Inc.
- Brabham, E. G., & Lynch-Brown, C. (2002). Effects of teachers' reading-aloud styles on vocabulary acquisition and comprehension of students in the early elementary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 94*(3), 465-473.

- Brett, A., Rothlein, L., & Hurley, M. (1996). Vocabulary acquisition from listening to stories and explanations of target words. *The Elementary School Journal*, 96, 415-422.
- Brody, G. H., Flor, D. L., & Gibson, N. M. (1999). Linking maternal efficacy beliefs, developmental goals, parenting practices, and child competence in rural single-parent African American families. *Child Development*, 70, 1197-1208.
- Burgess, S. R., Hecht, S. A., & Lonigan, C. J. (2002). Relations of the home literacy environment (HLE) to the development of reading-related abilities: A one-year longitudinal study. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 408-426.
- Bus, A. G., van Ijzendoorn, M. H., & Pellegrini, A. D. (1995). Joint-book reading makes for success in learning to read: A meta-analysis on intergenerational transmission of literacy. *Review of Educational Research*, 65, 1-21.
- Byrne, B., Freebody, P., & Gates, A. (1992). Longitudinal data on the relations of word reading strategies to comprehension, reading time, and phonemic awareness. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 271(2), 140-151.
- Canadian Council on Learning. (2007). *Lessons in learning: French-immersion education in Canada*. Retrieved from Canadian Council on Learning website: <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/LessonsInLearning/May-17-07-French-immersion.pdf>.
- Cancio, E. J., West, R. P., & Young, K. R.. (2004). Improving mathematics homework completion and accuracy of students with EBD through self-management and parent participation. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 12, 9-22.

- Chrispeels, J., & Rivero, E. (2001). Engaging Latino families for student success: How parent education can reshape parents' sense of place in the education of their children. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 76(2), 119-169.
- Christian, K., Morrison, F. J., Frazier, J. A., & Massetti, G. (2000). Specificity in the nature and timing of cognitive growth in kindergarten and first grade. *Journal of Cognition and Development*, 1(4), 429-448.
- Churchill, S. (2003). *Language education, Canadian civic identity and the identities of Canadians: Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe: From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education*. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe. Retrieved from <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/ChurchillEN.pdf>.
- Commissaire, E., Duncan, L. G., Casalis, S. (2011). Cross-language transfer of orthographic processing skills: A study of French children who learn English at school. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 34(2), 59-76.
- Comeau, L., Cormier, P., Grandmaison, E. & Lacroix, D. (1999). A longitudinal study of phonological processing skills in children learning to read in a second language. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91, 29-43.
- Corno, L. (2000). Looking at homework differently. *Elementary School Journal*, 100(5), 529–551.
- Craig, B. A. (1996). Parental attitudes toward bilingualism in a local two-way immersion program. *The Bilingual Research Journal*, 20(3-4), 383-410.

- Creswell, J. W. (2010). Mapping the developing landscape of mixed methods research. *Mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 45-68.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3d ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (1997). Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later. *Developmental Psychology*, 33(6), 934-945.
- Dagenais, D., & Jacquet, M., (2000). Valorisation du multilinguisme et de l'éducation bilingue dans des familles immigrantes. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 1(4), 389-404.
- Daneman, M. (1991). Individual differences in reading skills. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & D. P. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 512-538). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Deacon, S. H., Wade-Woolley, L., & Kirby, J. R. (2009). Flexibility in young second-language learners: Examining the language specificity of orthographic processing. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 32(2), 215-229.
- DeBaryshe, B. D., Binder, J. C., Buell, M. J. (2000). Mothers' implicit theories of early literacy instruction: Implications for children's reading and writing. *Early Child Development and Care*, 160, 119-131.

- DeBruin-Parecki, A. (Ed.). (2008). *Effective early literacy practice: Here`s how, here`s why*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1992). School matters in the Mexican-American home: Socializing children to education. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29, 495-513.
- DesJardin, J. L., Ambrose, S. E., & Eisenberg, S. (2011). Maternal involvement in the home literacy environment: Supporting literacy skills in children with cochlear implants. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 32(3), 135-150.
- Deslandes, R., & Bertrand, R. (2005). Motivation of parent involvement in secondary level schooling. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 98, 164-175.
- Desrochers, A. & Major, S. (2008). Literacy development in Canada. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(2), 79-81.
- Drummond, K.V., & Stipek, D. (2004). Low income parents' beliefs about their role in children's academic learning. *Elementary School Journal*, 104(2), 197-213.
- Dunn, L., & Dunn, L. (1997). *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test* (3d ed.). Bloomington, MN: Pearson Assessments.
- Dunn, L., Theriault-Whalen, C., & Dunn, L. (1993). *Echelle de vocabulaire en images Peabody: Adaptation française du Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised*. Toronto, ON: Psyc Can.
- Entwisle, D. R., Alexander, K. L., & Olson, L. S. (2005). First grade and educational attainment by age 22: A new story. *American Journal of Sociology* 110(5), 1458-1502.

- Epstein, J. L., & Van Voorhis, F. L. (2001). More than minutes: Teachers' roles in designing homework. *Educational Psychologist*, 36(3), 181-193.
- Evans, M. A., Levy, B. A., & Jared, D. (2001). *Home literacy experiences questionnaire*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Guelph.
- Evans, M. A., Shaw, D., & Bell, M. (2000). Home literacy activities and their influence on early literacy skills. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 54(2), 65-75.
- Evans, M.A., Moretti, S., Shaw, D., & Fox, M. (2003). Parent scaffolding in children's oral reading. *Early Education and Development*, 14(3), 363-388.
- Fan, X., & Chen, M. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 13, 1-22.
- Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2004). Early father's and mother's involvement and child's later educational outcomes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 74, 141-153.
- Francis, D. J., Shaywitz, S. E., Stuebing, K. K., Shaywitz, B. A., & Fletcher, J. M. (1996). Developmental lag versus deficit models of reading disability: A longitudinal, individual growth curves analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 88(1), 3-17.
- Genesee, F. (1978). A longitudinal evaluation of an early immersion program. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 3(4), 31-50.
- Genesee, F. (1987). *Learning through two languages: Studies of immersion and bilingual education*. Cambridge, MA: Newbury House Publishers.

- Genesee, F. (2004). What do we know about bilingual education for majority language students. In T. K. Bhatia & W. Ritchie (Eds.), *Handbook of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism*, 547-576. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Genesee, F., & Jared, D. (2008). Literacy development in early French immersion programs. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(2), 140-147.
- Giacchino-Baker, R., & Piller, B. (2006). Parental motivation, attitudes, support, and commitment in a southern Californian two-way immersion program. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 5, 5-28.
- Gold, B. T., Kim, C., Johnson, N. F., Kryscio, R. J., & Smith, C. D. (2013). Lifelong bilingualism maintains neural efficiency for cognitive control in aging. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 33(2), 387-396.
- Goldenberg, C., Rueda, R. S., & August, D. (2006). Synthesis: Sociocultural contexts and literacy development. In D. August, & T. Shanahan (Eds.). *Developing literacy in second language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on language minority children and youth* (pp. 249-267).
- Green, C. L., Walker, J. M. T., Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (2007). Parents' motivations for involvement in children's education: Empirical test of a theoretical model of parent involvement. *Educational Psychology*, 99, 532-544.
- Greene, J., & Hall, J. N. (2010). Dialectics and pragmatism. *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 119-67.

- Grolnick, W. S., Benjet, C., Kurowski, C. O., & Apostoleris, N. H. (1997). Predictors of parent involvement in children's schooling. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89, 538-548.
- Grolnick, W. S., & Slowiaczek, M. L. (1994). Parents' involvement in children's schooling: A multidimensional conceptualization and motivational model. *Child Development*, 65, 237-252.
- Gutman, L. M. & McLoyd, V. C. (2000). Parents' management of their children's education within the home, at school, and in the community: An examination of African-American families living in poverty. *The Urban Review*, 32, 1-24.
- Guttman, M. A. J. (1983). There's more to French immersion than social class. *Interchange*, 14(1), 17-22.
- Hammerly, H. (1989). *French immersion: Myths and reality*. Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises.
- Haney, M., & Hill, J. (2004). Relationships between parent-teaching activities and emergent literacy in preschool children. *Early Child Development and Care*, 174(3), 215-228.
- Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
- Hermanto, N., Moreno, S., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Linguistic and metalinguistic outcomes of intense immersion education: How bilingual? *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 15(2), 131-145.

- Hindman, A. H., & Morrison, F. J. (2012). Differential contributions of three parenting dimensions to preschool literacy and social skills in a middle-income sample. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 58(2), 191-223.
- Hoff, E. (2006). Environmental supports for language acquisition. In D. Dickinson & S. Neuman (Eds.), *Handbook of Early Literacy Research* (Vol 2.) (pp. 163-170). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Hoff, E., & Naigles, L. (2002). How children use input in acquiring a lexicon. *Child Development*, 73, 418-433.
- Hood, M., Conlon, E., & Andrews, G. (2008). Preschool home literacy practices and children's literacy development: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(2), 252-271.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Bassler, O. C., & Burow, R. (1995). Parents' reported involvement in students' homework: Strategies and practices. *Elementary School Journal*, 95, 435-450.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1995). Parental involvement in children's education: Why does it make a difference? *Teachers College Record*, 97(2), 310-331.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research*, 67 (1), 3-42.
- Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M. T., Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Green, C. L., Wilkins, A. S., & Closson, K. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research findings and implications. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106(2), 105-130.

- Huttenlocher, J., Haight, W., Bryk, A., Seltzer, M., & Lyons, T. (1991). Early vocabulary growth: Relation to language input and gender. *Developmental Psychology*, 27(2), 236-248.
- Izzo, C. V., Weissberg, R. P., Kasprow, W. J., & Fendrich, M. (1999). A longitudinal assessment of teacher perceptions of parent involvement in children's education and school performance. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 27, 817-839.
- Jared, D. (2008). Assessment of reading ability in French immersion students. *Encyclopedia of Language and Literacy Development* (pp.1-7). London, ON: Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network. Retrieved from <http://www.literacyencyclopedia.ca/pdfs/topic.php?topId=239>.
- Jedwab, J. (2004). *It pays to be bilingual in Canada: Though not everywhere*. Retrieved from Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages website: http://www.ocolclo.gc.ca/docs/f/Pays_to_be_Bilingual.pdf.
- Jeynes, W. H. (2005). A meta-analysis of the relation of parental involvement to urban elementary school student academic achievement. *Urban Education*, 40, 237-269.
- Jordan, G. E., Snow, C. E., & Porche, M. V. (2000). Project EASE: The effect of a family literacy project on kindergarten students' early literacy skills. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 524-546.
- Kalia, V. (2007). Assessing the role of book reading practices in Indian bilingual children's English language and literacy development. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 35, 149-153.

- Kamil, M. L., & Hiebert, E. H. (2005). Teaching and learning vocabulary: Perspectives and persistent issues. In E. H. Hiebert & M. L. Kamil (Eds.), *Teaching and learning vocabulary: Bringing research into practice*. (pp. 1-24). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kaniuka, T. S. (2010). Reading achievement, attitude toward reading, and reading self-esteem of historically low achieving students. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 37(2), 184-188.
- Karrass, J., VanDeventer, M. C., & Braungart-Rieker, J. M. (2003). Predicting shared parent-child book reading in infancy. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 17, 134-146.
- King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kirby, J. R., Parilla, R. K., & Pfeiffer, S. L. (2003). Naming speed and phonological awareness as predictors of reading development. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 95(2), 453-464.
- Kratochwill, T. R., McDonald, L., Levin, J. R., Bear-Tibbetts, H. Y., & Demaray, M. K. (2004). Families and schools together: An experimental analysis of a parent-mediated multi-family group program for American Indian children. *Journal of School Psychology*, 42, 359-383.
- Lambert, W. E., & Tucker, G. R. (1972). *Bilingual education of children: The St. Lambert experiment*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.
- Lamarre, P. B. G. (1997). *A comparative analysis of the development of immersion programs in British Columbia and Quebec: Two divergent sociopolitical contexts*. (Doctoral dissertation, The University of British Columbia, Canada) Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (UMI No. 304409147).

- Landry, S. H., & Smith, K. E. (2006). The influence of parenting on emerging literacy skills. In D. Dickinson & S. Neuman (Eds.), *Handbook of Early Literacy Research* (Vol 2.) (pp. 135-148). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Lapkin, S., Hart, D., & Turnbull, M. (2003). Grade 6 French immersion students' performance on large-scale reading, writing, and mathematics tests: Building explanations. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 49(1), 6-23.
- Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 102-120.
- Lazaruk, W. A. (2007). Linguistic, academic, and cognitive benefits of French immersion. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63, 605-627.
- LeFevre, J., & Sénéchal, M. (2002, August). *Learning to read in a second language: Parent involvement still counts*. Paper presented at the symposium Literacy Learning to Read: Cognitive, Motivational and Contextual, held at the biennial meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, Ottawa, Canada. Abstract retrieved from: <http://www3.carleton.ca/cacr/downloads/Learn%20Read%20second.pdf>.
- LeFevre, J., & Sénéchal, M. (2003, June). *Stability and change in children's home literacy experiences*. Poster session presented at the Annual Convention of the Canadian Psychological Association, Hamilton.
- Lesaux, N., Koda, K., Siegel, L., & Shanahan, T. (2006). Development of Literacy. In D. August, & T. Shanahan (Eds.). *Developing literacy in second language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on language minority children and youth* (pp. 75-122).

- Lescaux, N. K., & Kieffer, M. J. (2010). Exploring sources of reading comprehension difficulties among language minority learners and their classmates in early adolescence. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(3), 596-632.
- Lieber, E., & Weisner, T. S. (2010). Meeting the practical challenges of mixed methods research. *Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*, 559-611.
- Lysynchuk, L., Levin, E., & Watson, S. (2010). [Predictors of success in French immersion]. Unpublished raw data.
- MacCoubrey, S. J., Wade-Woolley, L., Klinger, D., & Kirby, J. R. (2004). Early identification of at risk L2 readers. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 61(1), 11-28.
- Makropoulos, J. (2010). Student engagement in an Ottawa French immersion high school program. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 33(3), 515-540.
- Masten, A. S., & Coatsworth, J. D. (1998). The development of competence in favorable and unfavorable environments: Lessons from research on successful children. *The American Psychologist*, 53(2), 205-230.
- Mauthner, N. S., & Doucet, A. (2003). Reflexive accounts and accounts of reflexivity in qualitative data analysis. *Sociology*, 37(3), 413-431.
- McBride-Chang, C. (2012). Shared-book reading: There is no downside for parents. In S. Suggate & E. Reese (Eds.), *Contemporary debates in childhood education and development* (pp 51-58). New York: Routledge.

- MacNab, G. L. (1979). Cognition and bilingualism: A reanalysis of studies. *Linguistics*, 17, 231–255. doi: 10.1515/ling.1979.17.3-4.231.
- McWayne, D., Hampton, V., Fantuzzo, J., Cohen, H. L., & Sekino, Y. (2004). A multivariate examination of parent involvement and the social and academic competencies of urban kindergarten children. *Psychology in the Schools*, 41, 363-377.
- Melby-Lervag, M., & Lervag, A. (2011). Cross-linguistic transfer of oral language, decoding, phonological awareness and reading comprehension: A meta-analysis of the correlational evidence. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 34(1), 114-135.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Morrison, F., Pawley, C., Bonyun, R., & Unitt, J. (1986) *Aspects of French immersion at the primary and secondary levels: Twelfth Annual Report*. Report prepared for the Ministry of Education, Ontario. Toronto, ON: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Morrow, L. M. (1992). The impact of a literacy-based program on literacy achievement, use of literature, and attitudes of children from minority backgrounds. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 27, 250-275.
- Morse, J. M. (1991). Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation. *Nursing Research*, 40, 120-123.
- Muter, V., Hulme, C., Snowling, M. J., & Stevenson, J. (2004). Phonemes, rimes, vocabulary, and grammatical skills as foundations of early reading development: Evidence from a longitudinal study. *Developmental Psychology*, 40(5), 665-681.

- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Retrieved from <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/nrp/Documents/report.pdf>.
- Neumann, M. M., & Neumann, D. L. (2009). More than just storybooks: Promoting emergent literacy skills in the home. *Childhood Education*, 85(4), 257-259.
- Nithart, C., Demont, E., Metz-Lutz, M., Majerus, S., Poncelet, M., & Leybaert, J. (2011). Early contribution of phonological awareness and later influence of phonological memory throughout reading acquisition. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 34(3), 346-363.
- Olson, P., & Burns, G. (1983). Politics, class, and happenstance: French immersion in a Canadian context. *Interchange*, 14(1), 1-16.
- Pan, B. A., Rowe, M. L., Singer, J. D., & Snow, C. E. (2005). Maternal correlates of growth in toddler vocabulary production in low-income families. *Child Development*, 76, 763-782.
- Pantin, H., Coatsworth, J. D., Feaster, D. J., Newman, F. K., Briones, E., Prado, G., Schwartz, S. J., & Szapocznik, J. (2003). Familias unidas: The efficacy of an intervention to promote parental investment in Hispanic immigrant families. *Prevention Science*, 4, 189-201.
- Parkes, J. (2008). Who chooses dual language education for their children and why. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 11, 635-660.
- Parkin, A., & Turcotte, A. (2004). *Bilingualism: Part of our past or part of our future?* Retrieved from Carleton University website:

http://www.library.carleton.ca/sites/default/files/find/data/surveys/pdf_files/cric-sol-03-not1_000.pdf.

- Patall, E. A., Cooper, H., & Robinson, J. C. (2008). Parent involvement in homework: A research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research*, 78, 1039-1101.
- Patterson, J. L. (2002). Relationships of expressive vocabulary to frequency of reading and television experience among bilingual toddlers. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 23, 493-508.
- Payne, A. C., Whitehurst, G. J., & Angell, A. L. (1994). The role of home literacy environment in the development of language ability in preschool children from low income families. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 9, 427-440.
- Peal, E., & Lambert, W. (1962). The relation of bilingualism to intelligence. *Psychological Monographs*, 76(27), 1-23.
- Pellegrini, A. D. (2002). Some theoretical and methodological considerations in studying literacy in social context. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (Vol 1) (pp. 135-148). New York: Guilford Press.
- Ricci, L. (2011). Home literacy environments, interest in reading and emergent literacy skills of children with Down syndrome versus typical children. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 55, 596-609.
- Ricciardelli, L. A. (1992). Bilingualism and cognitive development in relation to threshold theory. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 21, 301-316.

- Rowe, M. L., Raudenbush, S. W., & Goldin-Meadow, S. (2012). The pace of vocabulary growth helps predict later vocabulary size. *Child Development*, 83, 508-525.
- Rumberger, R. W. (1995). Dropping out of middle school: A multilevel analysis of students and schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32, 583-625.
- Scarborough, H. S. (2002). Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. In S. Neuman, & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp.97-110). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Scarborough, H. S., & Dobrich, W. (1994). On the efficacy of reading to preschoolers. *Developmental Review*, 14(3), 245-302.
- Scarborough, H. S., Dobrich, W., & Hagar, M. (1991). Preschool literacy experience and later reading achievement. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 24(8), 508-511.
- Sénéchal, M., & LeFevre, J. (2001). Storybook reading and parent teaching: links to language and literacy development. *New Directions For Child and Adolescent Development*, 92, 39–52.
- Sénéchal, M., & LeFevre, J. (2002). Parental involvement in the development of children's reading skill: A 5 year longitudinal study. *Child Development*, 73, 445-460.
- Sénéchal, M., LeFevre, J., Thomas, E. M., & Daley, K. E. (1998). Differential effects of home literacy experiences on the development of oral and written language. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33, 96-116.

- Sénéchal, M., & Young, L. (2008). The effect of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading from kindergarten to grade 3: A meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(4), 880-907.
- Shannon, S. M., & Milan, M. (2002). Parents choose dual language programs in Colorado: A survey. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 26(3), 681-696.
- Sheldon, S. B. (2002). Parents' social networks and beliefs as predictors of parent involvement. *Elementary School Journal*, 102, 301-316.
- Sheldon, S. B., & Epstein, J. L. (2005). Involvement counts: Family and community partnerships and mathematics achievement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 98(4), 196-206.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22, 63-75.
- Silverman, R., & Crandall, J. D. (2010). Vocabulary practices in prekindergarten and kindergarten classes. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 45(3), 318-340.
- Skibbe, L. E., Justice, L. M., Zucker, T. A., & McGinty, A. S. (2008). Relations among maternal literacy beliefs, home literacy practices, and the emergent literacy skills of preschoolers with specific language impairment. *Early Education and Development*, 19(1), 68-88.
- Smith, J. A. (1996). Evolving issues for qualitative psychology. *Handbook of qualitative research methods for psychology and the social sciences*, 189-201.

- Smith, J. A. (2004). Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 1*, 39-54.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, method and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Snow, C. (2006). Cross-cutting themes and future directions. In D. August & T. Shanahan (Eds.), *Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners* (pp. 631-651).
- Sohr-Preston, S. L., Scaramella, L. V. (2006). Implications of timing of maternal depressive symptoms for early cognitive and language development. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 9*, 65-83.
- Stadler, M. A., & McEvoy, M. A. (2003). The effect of text genre on parent use of joint book reading strategies to promote phonological awareness. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 18*, 502-512.
- Stahl, S. A., & Murray, B.A. (1994). Defining phonological awareness and its relationship to early reading. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 86* (2).
- Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21* (4), 360-407.
- Stanovich, K. E., & West, R. F. (1989). Exposure to print and orthographic processing. *Reading Research Quarterly, 24*, 402-433.

- Starkey, P., & Klein, A. (2000). Fostering parental support for children's mathematical development: An intervention with Head Start families. *Early Education and Development*, 11, 659-680.
- Statistics Canada (2012). *Focus on Geography Series, 2011 Census: Census metropolitan area of Greater Sudbury/Grand Sudbury, Ontario*. (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-310-XWE2011004) Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Facts-cma-eng.cfm?LANG=Eng&GK=CMA&GC=580>.
- Statistics Canada. (2013). *Study: The evolution of English-French bilingualism in Canada from 1961 to 2011*. (Insights on Canadian Society 75-006-X). Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/130528/dq130528b-eng.htm>.
- Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S. D., Dornbusch, S. M., & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, and encouragement to succeed. *Child Development*, 63, 1266-1281.
- Su-Chu, E. H., & Willms, J. D. (1996). Effects of parental involvement on eighth-grade achievement. *Sociology of Education*, 69(2), 126-141.
- Swain, M. (1997). French immersion programs in Canada. In J. Cummins, & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education: Vol. 5. Bilingual education* (pp. 261-270). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1982). *Evaluating bilingual education: A Canadian case study*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

- Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2005). The evolving sociopolitical context of immersion education in Canada: Some implications for program development. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15(2), 169-186.
- Turnbull, M., Lapkin, S., & Hart, D. (2001). Grade 3 immersion students' performance in literacy and mathematics: Province-wide results from Ontario (1989-99). *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 58(1), 9-26.
- Uchikoshi, Y. (2006). English vocabulary development in bilingual kindergartners: What are the best predictors? *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 9(1), 33-49.
- Vanhove, J. (2013). The critical hypothesis in second language acquisition: A statistical critique and a reanalysis. *Plos One*, 8(7), e69172. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0069172.
- Walker, J. M. T., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J. R., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *Elementary School Journal*, 106(2), 85-104.
- Weigel, D. J., Martin, S. S., & Bennett, K. K. (2005). Ecological influences of the home and the child-care center on preschool-age children's literacy development. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40, 204-233.
- Weigel, D. J., Martin, S. S., & Bennett, K. K. (2006). Mothers' literacy beliefs: Connections with the home literacy environment and pre-school children's literacy development. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 6(3), 191-211.

- White, T. G., Graves, M. F., & Slater, W. H. (1990). Growth of reading vocabulary in diverse elementary schools: Decoding and word meaning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82, 281-290.
- Whitehurst, G. J., & Lonigan, C. J. (1998). Child development and early literacy. *Child Development*, 69, 848-872.
- Whitehurst, G. J., & Lonigan, C. J. (2002). Emergent literacy: Development from prereaders to readers. In S. Neuman, & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp.11-29). New York: Guilford Press.
- Zellman, G. L., & Waterman, J. M. (1998). Understanding the impact of parent school involvement on children's educational outcomes. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 91, 370-380.

Appendix A: Research Ethics Board Approval



APPROVAL FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
Research Ethics Board – Laurentian University

This letter confirms that the research project identified below has successfully passed the ethics review by the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board (REB). Your ethics approval date, other milestone dates, and any special conditions for your project are indicated below.

TYPE OF APPROVAL	New	X	Modifications to project	Time extension
Name of Principal Investigator and school/department	Jennifer Bingley (Dr. Linda Lysynchuk; supervisor) — Psychology (LU)			
Title of Project	<i>Home Literacy Practices and the Development of Reading Ability in Children</i>			
REB file number	2011-04-15			
Date of original approval of project	May 31 st 2011			
Date of approval of project modifications or extension (if applicable)				
Final/Interim report due on	October 15 2011			
Conditions placed on project	Final or Interim report on October 15 2011			

During the course of your research, no deviations or changes to the protocol, recruitment or consent forms may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. If you wish to modify your research project, please complete the appropriate [REB form](#).

All projects must submit a report to REB at least once per year. If involvement with human participants continues for longer than one year (e.g. you have not completed the objectives of the study and have not yet terminated contact with the participants, except for feedback of final results to participants), you must request an extension using the appropriate [REB FORM](#).

In all cases, please ensure that your research complies with the [Tri-Council Policy Statement \(TCPS\)](#). Also please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence with the REB office.

Congratulations, and best of luck in conducting your research.

Daniel Côté, Ph.D.
Chair of the *Laurentian University Research Ethics Board*
Laurentian University

Appendix B: Questionnaire Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

I hereby grant permission for my participation in this research examining the effect of the home environment on early literacy skills which is being conducted at Laurentian University. I understand that I will be participating in a brief questionnaire regarding home literacy activities. I have been informed that the questionnaire will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. I understand that the data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, and only the researchers will have access to it. I understand that this data will be kept for 5 years after the end of the research study and will then be destroyed.

I understand that I am not obligated to participate in this study, and my participation is strictly voluntary. I understand that I may withdraw at any time without consequence, and that I have the right to refuse to answer any question(s). Furthermore, I understand that the results of this study will not affect my child's grades.

I understand that all material collected will be used for research purposes only and that my anonymity will be protected. Any personal information gathered as part of this study will remain private and confidential.

If I have any questions, I have been invited to speak to Jennifer Bingley at jx_bingley@laurentian.ca or Linda Lysynchuk, PhD at (705) 675-1151, ext 4244 for more information or Jean Dragon, Research Officer at (705) 675-1151, ext 3213 for ethical concerns.

Thank you for your participation.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please print your contact information below if you would like to be contacted to arrange an interview:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please print your contact information below if you would like to be provided with a brief summary of the research findings:

Email: _____

Appendix C: Interview Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

I hereby grant permission for my participation in this research examining the effect of the home environment on early literacy skills which is being conducted at Laurentian University.

I understand that I will be participating in an interview regarding home literacy activities and my experience within the school system as a parent. I have been informed that the interview will last approximately 30 minutes. I also consent to the audio-recording of these interviews. I understand that the data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, and only the researchers will have access to it. I understand that this data will be kept for 5 years after the end of the research study and will then be destroyed.

I understand that I am not obligated to participate in this study, and my participation is strictly voluntary. I understand that I may withdraw at any time without consequence, and that I have the right to refuse to answer any question(s). Furthermore, I understand that the results of this study will not affect my child's grades.

I understand that all material collected will be used for research purposes only and that my anonymity will be protected. Any personal information gathered as part of this study will remain private and confidential.

If I have any questions, I have been invited to speak to Jennifer Bingley at jx_bingley@laurentian.ca or Linda Lysynchuk, PhD at (705) 675-1151, ext 4244 for more information or Jean Dragon, Research Officer at (705) 675-1151, ext 3213 for ethical concerns.

Thank you for your participation.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

☐ I would like to be contacted by the researcher for the opportunity to obtain a summary of the research findings and provide feedback.

Appendix D: Interview Guide

Interview Guide:

What is your child's first name? How old are they?

Do they have brothers or sisters? How old are they? Which school are they attending?

Tell me about your experience as a parent having a child in the (English/French) program?

Can you describe how your experience has changed since kindergarten?

Can you describe your relationship, as a parent, with the teachers? (*What is communication between home and school/feedback/support like?*)

Tell me about your relationship with the school. (*Do they feel involved? What is support like?*)

Can you describe your child's experience in the program?

Tell me about the benefits of your program choice? The drawbacks?

Do you read to your child? In English or French?

Can you describe what reading might be like? What types of things do you do while you are reading? (*Ask questions, define words, discuss content, sounding out, focus on the print per se: letter pronunciation, phonics, punctuation, etc.*)

Tell me about reading in English versus reading in French reading in English and French? (*Where, when, with whom, what you are doing*)

Tell me about the kinds of things you would do if your child was having difficulty with a word while you were reading together.

Does your child read to you? In English or French?

Does your child read English or French outside of school?

Yes: Can you tell me about that? (*What they are reading, where, when, with whom, English or French*)

No: Why do you feel that is?

Can you describe to me what homework time is like? (*What are they doing? How are parents helping?*)

How could the program be improved?

Is there anything that you would like to add, or that you think we should know?

Appendix E: Home Literacy Questionnaire

Please fill out the following questions. For questions referring to your partner (if applicable), please have your partner fill out the questions with you or answer to the best of your ability. Thank you for your participation.

1. What school does your child attend? _____
2. What is your relationship to the child? Mother Father Other (specify) _____
3. If willing, please state your approximate annual family income before taxes: _____

For the following questions please circle the number which best corresponds to the frequency with which the activity described occurs using the legends provided.

4. How often do you or your partner do the following when reading to your child:

1 = Never	2 = Once a month	3 = 2-3 times a month	4 = Once a week	5 = 3-4 times a week	6 = Almost every day
--------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--------|---|--------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Direct your child's attention to the printed text | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Talk to him/her about the content of the book | Other: _____ |

5. How often, in a typical week, do you or your partner teach your child to:

1 = Never	2 = Once a month	3 = 2-3 times a month	4 = Once a week	5 = 3-4 times a week	6 = Almost every day
--------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Print words | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Read words | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Spell words | Other: _____ |

6. How often, outside of school, does your child:

1 = Never	2 = Once a month	3 = 2-3 times a month	4 = Once a week	5 = 3-4 times a week	6 = Almost every day
--------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--------|------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Read English | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Read French | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Write in English | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Write in French | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Speak French | Other: _____ |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6..... | Speak another language | Other: _____ |

7. How much does your child enjoy reading in:

English.....	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely	Not applicable
French.....	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely	Not applicable

English Home Literacy

We are interested in the **ENGLISH** literacy activities and materials children might or not be engaged in at home. Listed below are different activities. We do not expect children would pursue all of them. Rate how often your child has been involved in each of them at home since the beginning of the present school year.

CHILD INVOLVEMENT

1 = Never	2 = Once a month	3 = 2-3 times a month	4 = Once a week	5 = 3-4 times a week	6 = Almost every day
--------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....doing word games (e.g., crossword, word find) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....watch you print/type |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading signs or labels |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....educational games (Spill & Spell, Boggle, etc.) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....listening to books you read |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....writing letters or words |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....listening to storybook CDs |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....looking at magazines/books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....learning about word parts |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....visiting public library |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....visiting bookstore |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....playing computer games involving reading |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....using children's picture dictionary |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....watching educational t.v. (e.g. Sesame Street) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....listening to rhyming words/rhyming stories/poems |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....writing a note or story |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading out loud |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....spelling words out loud |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....practice writing individuals words |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading chapter books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading short story books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading children's non-fiction books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....engage in extra-curricular lessons (e.g. workbooks/worksheets/tutoring) |

How often does your child see you (in English):

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading (newspaper, books, magazines, online articles) for pleasure |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....doing word games (e.g., crossword, word find) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....watching you print |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....visiting public library or bookstore |

Where do you read to your child in English (**Circle all that apply**)?

Living Room Family Room Kitchen Bedroom Outdoors Other (specify)_____

How enjoyable do you find reading with your child (or listening to them read aloud) in English:

Not at all Slightly Somewhat Moderately Extremely

On a day when an adult reads English with your child at home, how many minutes would this usually be?

Up to 15 minutes 15-30 minutes 30-45 minutes 45-60 minutes An hour +

French Home Literacy

We are interested in the **FRENCH** literacy activities and materials children might or not be engaged in at home. Listed below are different activities. We do not expect children would pursue all of them. Rate how often your child has been involved in each of them at home since the beginning of the present school year.

CHILD INVOLVEMENT

1 = Never	2 = Once a month	3 = 2-3 times a month	4 = Once a week	5 = 3-4 times a week	6 = Almost every day
--------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....doing word games (e.g., crossword, word find) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....watch you print/type |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading signs or labels |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....educational games (Spill & Spell, Boggle, etc.) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....listening to books you read |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....writing letters or words |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....listening to storybook CDs |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....looking at magazines/books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....learning about word parts |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....visiting public library |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....visiting bookstore |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....playing computer games involving reading |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....using children's picture dictionary |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....watching educational t.v. (e.g. Sesame Street) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....listening to rhyming words/rhyming stories/poems |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....writing a note or story |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading out loud |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....spelling words out loud |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....practice writing individuals words |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading chapter books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading short story books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading children's non-fiction books |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....engage in extra-curricular lessons (e.g. workbooks/worksheets/tutoring) |

How often does your child see you (in French):

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....reading (newspaper, books, magazines, online articles) for pleasure |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....doing word games (e.g., crossword, word find) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....watching you print |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6.....visiting public library or bookstore |

Where do you read to your child in French (**Circle all that apply**)?

Living Room Family Room Kitchen Bedroom Outdoors Other (specify)_____

How enjoyable do you find reading with your child (or listening to them read aloud) in French:

Not at all Slightly Somewhat Moderately Extremely

On a day when an adult reads French with your child at home, how many minutes would this usually be?

Up to 15 minutes 15-30 minutes 30-45 minutes 45-60 minutes An hour

Appendix F: Letter to Parents
(on university letterhead)

Dear Parents:

I'm a Graduate student enrolled in the Master's of Applied Psychology Program at Laurentian University. Currently, I am working on my Master's thesis project supervised by Dr. Linda Lysynchuk who is a professor and head of the psychology department at Laurentian University. The purpose of this study is to provide information about the relationship between home literacy activities and early literacy skills, and describe the experiences parents have as their child progresses through school. We would appreciate your participation in this study.

This letter is requesting your participation for this year only. Participation will involve a brief questionnaire regarding activities you do at home which are related to literacy. The questionnaire will require approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Furthermore, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview with me regarding home literacy activities and your experience within the school system as a parent. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes and will be conducted at a mutually convenient time and place.

You are under no obligation to participate in this study and you may withdraw at any time without consequence. The results of this study will not affect your child's grades. Personal information gathered as part of this study will remain private and confidential. This project has been approved by the Rainbow District Board of Education and the ethics board at Laurentian University.

If you do choose to participate, please fill out one copy of the attached consent form and questionnaire and return it to your child's classroom teacher in a sealed envelope as soon as possible.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Jennifer Bingley at jx_bingley@laurentian.ca or Linda Lysynchuk at (705) 675-1151 ext 4244 for more information or Jean Dragon, Research Officer at Laurentian University, at 675-1151 ext 3213 for ethical concerns.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bingley, M.A. Candidate,
Department of Psychology,
Laurentian University

Linda Lysynchuk, PhD
Chair,
Department of Psychology,
Laurentian University.

Appendix G: Table of Themes and Sample Quotes

Theme	Subtheme	Quote
Reasons for Enrolling (Or Not Enrolling)	Opportunity	<p>Rachael: “Probably mostly employment reasons. I think, also in a bilingual community social is a big thing too, you know, because if you don't have both languages there might be barriers... or limits to that I guess things you can be involved in.”</p> <p>Ella: “For the jobs. In Northern Ontario, if you want to work for the government, you have to be bilingual. So I don't want to shut doors on him before he knows what he wants to do.”</p> <p>Erica: “Well, I'm pretty sure just from my own career I guess, my own academic history, my experience has been that learning a second language, especially French, would be a huge asset to them in opportunities, career paths, anywhere they wanted to go in the world it would be very helpful for them to have a second language.”</p>
	Falling Behind	<p>Mark and Samantha (Samantha): “With the French program and French Immersion I was just worried that you're not mastering one language. You're only good at both you've haven't mastered one. So if it comes down to things like composition and writing you're not going to be very good at it, in English or French. So compare that to somebody who's gone through a track that's all French or track all English. That's my only worry.”</p> <p>Beth: “And the other thing was their ability to read in and do all of the same things in English that children their age should be doing. We were afraid that they would be behind in that...they would learn to read in French and I was worried about the English not being there.”</p> <p>Ella: “I think that they lose... their English spelling, and their English language. They're – it's not – they don't lose it, it's just harder for them... And I also find that their spelling is better, their reading is better, in English, right? The main language.”</p>
	Reputation of School	<p>Katrina and Logan (Logan): “[The school] has a better reputation in the community for sure.”</p>

		<p>Ella: “I went on the provincial testing scores and they were pretty good.”</p> <p>Jessica: “Basically... I had heard nothing but amazing things about [the school]... I started to... inquire from play groups and different things. I was talking to the kids, too.”</p>
	Characteristics of Child	<p>Robin: “I thought about the frustration for them and... you know, did they have the kind of tolerance to be able and the patience to do that.”</p> <p>Sophia: “...from my children’s development when they were like before school started, I felt pretty strongly that they should be, you know, pretty good at handling it...If I felt, like, a little iffy then I might have considered the English program, but I felt they were developing quite strong right from the beginning.”</p> <p>Elizabeth: “I felt, too, that [my daughter] was bright enough because neither of us speak French at all so we knew going into it, it would take a student that was more prepared. We felt that she was at the level that it wouldn’t be too big of a challenge.”</p>
	Cultural	<p>Victoria: “Because my husband is French from Quebec. I’m English from Ontario and I learned French as a second language as an adult which was very difficult...“Well, it’s a cultural thing too. And it’s family...A lot of family is in Quebec and they only speak French so...”</p> <p>Chloe: “I mean, it opens up more cultures and more people to you...I mean, English and French have a lot in common. You know, a lot of similar words and yet still I find there are differences in concepts in English and French and definitely, you know some unique cultural differences... it just widens your world.”</p> <p>Evan: “And just for culture... Whether it’s French or Spanish or Chinese. I don’t think it really matters. Um, because of our geographical region, I think French is important.”</p>
	Cognitive Advantage	<p>Paige: “We think that learning a second language will help overall brain development, overall, um, capacity to learn in general and kind of challenge our girls in a way that we think is good for them in the long term....And really, brain development. Really, it’s about the ... them learning something else, and in my</p>

		<p>mind, learning a second language will help them ... in their overall development. Capacity ... to learn.”</p> <p>Hazel: “I also know that children who learn different languages develop... their brain develops differently and they’re usually ahead later in life. Not in the beginning when they learn the languages, but when they get older they're usually better at solving problems and those kinds of things.”</p> <p>Emma: “I think it’s good for development for their brain...I know there’s research about second language development just in terms of general overall brain development and it being beneficial, so I was interested in that.”</p>
Confidence and Self Efficacy	Parents feel they are unable to help with homework	<p>Hazel: “Sometimes I just wish I could do something. You know? But that's the whole point for immersion, I think. That you don't have to be French speaking. But sometimes I think maybe teachers assume that the parents can speak French because we obviously live in Canada and most people who grew up in Canada know French, at least basics because they all had it in school. But I didn't. So you don't even know the alphabet or anything so you really can't help them.”</p> <p>Emily: “My only concern at the time and it’s getting to be more of a concern as they get older is that I don’t speak French very well so my ability to support them or answer questions that they have. That’s the only disadvantage that I was concerned about and that I am seeing a little bit now.”</p> <p>Evan: “Well, I think it’s difficult. And I know there are a lot of resources available for parents. But I think it’s really difficult to have a child in the French immersion program when neither parent speaks a word of French. Because they’re bringing work home and they’re having to read or they’re trying to, you know, put the right emphasis on certain words, and I – I can’t help them. I have no idea. So I think a lot of times they struggle with bringing homework home that they’re trying to do, but they don’t really remember and don’t really know how to do it. And, you know, there is a lot of homework that comes home that’s just incomplete... I think it’s a big thing... It’s just there’s certain things they have to do when he comes home. And he’s like, ‘Dad.’ You know, ‘What does this say?’ Because there’ll be a question and if he can’t read the question then he can’t do the answer... When homework comes home or any assignments</p>

		<p>come home it's all in French. So if you don't read it you can't. When your son says, you know, 'What are they asking me to do here?' You just don't know."</p>
	Utilization of resources to support learning	<p>Hazel: "With the little one now it's a bit easier because the big one can help him so when he has to read, this morning actually he had to read, he can tell him how to pronounce it..."</p> <p>Mia: "I have an English-French dictionary on hand all the time for when we are doing homework because sometimes even simple assignments I am not clear what the intent is."</p> <p>Evan: And I think we took a lot more aggressive work in a lot of the homework he was doing. We were getting more... Well, we were communicating with the teacher directly, and said, 'Ok, show me how to do that so I can show him how to do it.'"</p>

Reading Together	English Program	<p>Eva: “We read every night before they go to bed, with the odd exception of course, but that’s a really important part of the day for me, is to be able to spend some time with them one on one and reading before they hit the sack is really a big part of it...”</p> <p>Norah: “It’s a very, very relaxing time... When I read to him, it’s sort of a way of preparing him for bed. I read every night before I go to bed. So I just think that’s a nice habit for him to get into.”</p> <p>Natalie: “I started reading to [my son] when he was about 6 months old... Because I’ve always loved to read. My husband reads. Like – We, you know, love to read so we wanted to pass that on to him. So. Even now when he, you know, I know that he doesn’t need me to read. We still, we sit and we read at bedtime and, like, we always, always read to him. And it’s not so much as, you know, because I know he can read it, it’s just the fun of doing it together. And, you know, 6 months old I would stare at the side of his crib and he’d be standing there and he’d be holding onto the bars... holding on and I’d be reading... We’ve always done that. Climb into bed, grab a book. It’s something. It’s alone time. It’s time, you know. Sometimes after a busy day you just sit and that’s what we would do.”</p>
------------------	-----------------	---

	<p>French immersion Program (Parents who reported that they are not comfortable using French)</p>	<p>Robin: "...sometimes I'll just read. We just read the story and talk about the story afterwards. Sometimes we just read the book itself. And because it's bedtime and we're just going to enjoy the story and, you know, laugh over it or whatever."</p> <p>Hazel: "So our oldest son he has to do homework anyway and part of the homework is often reading so he has to read. And then before they go to bed, not every night, but often, I read to them and they choose the book, so they decide what they want to read."</p> <p>Olivia: "Well we read almost every night, very rare if we don't read. It's the bedtime story routine, we read to them. There is usually about two or three books. We read one book together as a family and then they pick a book each...usually it's about half an hour to forty-five minutes by the time we're done... So they start getting ready at about seven and they brush their teeth and everything, they hop into bed. My husband usually sits down and reads them their story because that's their time together and I'll be around. Sometimes I'll have to read if he's working late but they're sitting on their bed and they are reading."</p>
--	---	---

	<p>French Immersion Program (Parents who reported that they are comfortable using French)</p>	<p>Ava: “Always before bed is the recreational reading which we start about 8:00 and try to finish by 8:20. Immediately after supper we do whatever reading he has been assigned by the school.”</p> <p>Michelle: “We do have a few French books that we do have at home so I'll try and read those to him. And then I try and ask him, ‘Do you understand what I'm saying?’ And then he'll pick out certain words that he understands and so we try and go through them that way. But I try and, uh, my husband tries to read to him as well... it's a struggle to find the time... Whatever book he picks out. I try and ask him to pick out one of each [English and French] but we're limited to the French books that we do have at home, so.”</p> <p>Ella: “I read them to him [in French] before bed and he has a Leapster to help him with his numbers... a lot of time, it's before bed, so we're in his bed and it's just me and him or his father and him. He's sitting up looking and I've been trying to do the finger thing to show him which word I am reading and so I'll read him the page and especially if it's in French I'll read the page and transit it in English to make sure he got it. I'll ask him, ‘Did you understand?’ I'll try to pick out easy words sometimes and drill him on, ‘Do you know what that word is?’”</p>
--	---	--

French is Homework in French Immersion	Parents who reported that they are not comfortable using French	<p>Hazel: "...if he brings home a French book from school we do, or if we're doing homework... Like they've sent home a sheet telling you what they're doing for the month, so they will have the shapes in French and... the like the different things the colours in French, so we'll go over them and those things together. As for reading French, no... It's a more school thing then a recreational thing."</p> <p>Charlotte: "Now, I do make her listen to her sister, because her sister reads French and I don't, so that's the only other time she'll accept someone else to read... But [she] won't have it, so since I don't know French I'll have to say, 'You have to let [your sister] read. ...I'm the one that pulls out the French and then we'll read it like that... So I guess it's not a fun thing in that way, it's a work thing. I want them to work at their French so I will do that, but I don't push too much on them, like if [she] is picking five books I would make one of the French. 'Okay, we still have your French, we still need to practice.' 'Oh okay.'"</p> <p>Beth: "Totally different. In English it's kind of-like - it's relaxing. The way you wind down for the evening. It's kind of that loving time. And French is always about work and homework. And frustration. [my younger son] doesn't understand a lot of the words and he gets frustrated quickly. [My older son] understands it but it's French to him; it's homework to him. So he gets sent reading logs he has to do for school so he has to read like two French books per week. And then he has to write sentences about it using certain categories to prompt him to actually write about the book he's reading. And it's work and it drives me crazy... So he - they don't like me reading to [them] in French. I guess they associate with that with school and with work and it's not the relaxing time."</p>
	Parents who reported that they are comfortable using French	<p>Rachael: "[We read] A little bit [of French], yeah. So if we manage to pick out a French book at the library ...well we managed to buy one recently from the ...book fair that comes to the school, I guess... But ...usually it will be me to read a French book. I will read a page in French and then just translate it and I'll read the next page and translate it in English again. So I don't know if that's how we should be doing it or just reading it straight in French and letting him figure it out (laughs)... It's relaxed, before kind of bed stuff."</p>

		<p>Michelle: “We'll have French supper nights... Or you know, it's like you can only speak French. Or we'll have like you know. We'll pick an event, you know like if we're driving out to the cousins and we know that the cousins are primarily French, with a very strong French accent, when they speak English, it's quite funny. Urn (laughs) but they're urn, so we'll have a French right, or French ride, a French drive or whatever so we can only speak French... Every Saturday night there's usually an English Montreal, no sorry, an English Toronto game going and then a French Montreal game going, so he does watch some TV in French (laughs).”</p> <p>Samantha: “I speak with [my son] daily in French. Like I would play "I Spy" in French or I would ask...a lot of times my son would ask me are you afraid of skeletons or like he would ask me questions in French. Or I would say what do you see out your window? In the car. I would ask him that in French, trying to use the context around me to get to practice words that he is using.”</p>
Importance of Communication and Support		<p>Jessica: “[She] was reading at a level 4 at Christmas time...[The teacher] was like, ‘We’re not going down without a fight. We can do this.’...the early reading intervention program stepped in and [she] ended up, I guess a level fourteen... and she was a level sixteen when they tested her at the end of the school year. So like, just miracles, you know...They can just go and do their job and go home. Mark a few tests. But they don’t and they do that with all the kids. Like, I have communication books with all the kids and every night I get something really wonderful written.”</p> <p>Zoe & Nathan (Nathan): “It’s good we were made aware of it so that we can work in it so it’s not a problem when he’s 13 or 14... At least now it’s been brought to our attention that the sooner that these delays are recognized and treated, the more successful the child will be.”</p> <p>Ella: “I think he’s had, um, times when he’s needed the support of the teachers. He needed some – some guidance, and he got it. And there was times when they thought they may need to have him, like extra help or whatever. They didn’t, but they thought they might, and they were ready to support that.”</p>